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Threat to Euro-laws since 1957

EC challenges court's Delors signature ruling

FROM TOM WALKER IN BRUSSELS

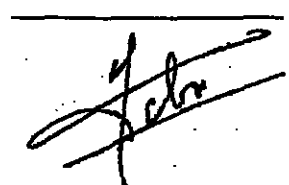
THE European Commission will lodge a desperate appeal against a Court of Justice ruling that could invalidate almost all legislation emanating from Brussels since the Community was founded in 1957.

The dispute, which threw the legal department into turmoil yesterday, has arisen over the procedure for signing Commission judgments.

The European court ruled that the Commission had broken its own rules by allowing a single commissioner to sign judgments when they should have been authorised by Jacques Delors, the Commission president, and the secretary-general.

The Commission has been given two months to appeal against the ruling, which M Delors's spokesman said was "too rigid an interpretation". Commission sources said the EC would move fast to limit the damage caused by the judgment.

Confusion reigned in the corridors of the Commission's Breydel building yesterday as officials tried to establish whether the Luxembourg court ruling was merely a legal anomaly or whether it could force the overstretched legal department to the brink of collapse. However, one commercial lawyer said yesterday: "I think it's safe to say jobs are on the line. There's a feeling that there are people running for cover."



If Jacques Delors, whose signature is reproduced above, put his name to 8,000 documents each year in all nine languages, he would take 70 hours with his black Mont Blanc pen to complete the task. Normally the documents are issued in six languages but occasionally versions in nine languages are necessary.

Whether the Luxembourg court ruling was merely a legal anomaly or whether it could force the overstretched legal department to the brink of collapse. However, one commercial lawyer said yesterday: "I think it's safe to say jobs are on the line. There's a feeling that there are people running for cover."

The ruling was handed down after a group of 14 polyvinyl chloride companies appealed against a £17.5 million fine imposed by the Commission in March 1989. Although the court did not quibble with the Commission's finding that the companies, which included Shell and ICI, had been operating a cartel, it found that the Commission had breached its own rules and the fine was quashed. Some documents had been altered in translation and the action against the cartel had not been properly authorised.

It is the last point which has caused the greatest alarm in Brussels, since few of the 8,000 judgments reached by the Commission each year are "properly authorised" according to its own rules. Competition rulings are decided by 17 commissioners who meet once a week. Draft judgments, produced in English, French and German, are attached to the minutes of each meeting and these are then signed by M Delors and David Williamson, the Commission's secretary-general.

However, the Spanish, Italian and Dutch translations of the judgments are usually signed by only one commissioner, to ease the burden on M Delors. Although most papers are reproduced in six languages, some have to be translated into the nine languages used by EC members.

It emerged yesterday that many documents have been signed by Jean Dondelinger, the little-known Luxembourg culture commissioner. "He's often the only one around the building," one official explained.

Although the court's ruling could invalidate most Commission judgments, it is the decisions made by the fourth of the organisation's 23 directorate-generals (DG4) which are particularly vulnerable. DG4 deals with competition policy and the ruling may clear the way for companies to reclaim millions of pounds in fines imposed by Brussels as part of its purge on cartels in the past few years.

The chemical cartel ruling is particularly embarrassing for Sir Leon Brittan, as competition commissioner he is in charge of DG4, although he did not hold the post when the Commission imposed the fine in 1989. It has been a bad year for DG4. It is the fourth time since Christmas that the court has found that the Commission either exceeded its powers or misinterpreted them and appeals against EC edicts from British Aerospace, the Dutch postal service and La Cinq, the French private television channel, have all been upheld.

Legal experts at the Breydel building - which the Commission moved to this year after it was evacuated from the asbestos-riddled Beldraymont building - said yesterday that it was unlikely that the practice of *notary de facto* could be changed. This is the system by which multilingual legal experts translate Commission judgments and one commissioner signs the translations. As a result, Article 12 of the Commission's own rules, which stipulates that the president and the secretary-general must sign all translations, may have to be changed. "The court has to decide if that is just a grammatical change or whether it is substantial," one Commission source said.



Pause for thought: Kenneth Baker, the home secretary, shoeless, garlanded and head covered, visiting a Sikh temple in Edinburgh yesterday. He is in Scotland to take part in the debate on its constitutional future

IRA rush-hour bomb injures 30 at station

BY STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

A TIME bomb exploded yesterday in a lavatory on a platform at London Bridge station at the height of the morning rush hour, injuring 30 people, closing every main line station in the capital and halting the Underground system for hours.

Commander George Churchill-Coleman, head of Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch, said he was satisfied the attack was "a typical, irresponsible, criminal and callous act carried out by the IRA". An inadequate warning was given, and the bomb, consisting of two pounds of high explosive, "was designed to kill".

Many of the injured were struck by flying glass or debris. Some of the victims walked the quarter mile from the station, in Southwark on the south bank of the Thames, to Guy's hospital and admitted themselves. Those who had suffered shock, concussion and abrasions, were taken to Guy's by ambulances. Of the 28 people treated, four suffered what were described as moderately serious wounds.

John Major and other senior politicians condemned the attack, and Kenneth Baker, the home secretary, said he hoped the bomb was not intended to coincide with the pre-general election period. "An election campaign is all about persuading people about ideas, principles and policies - it is not using bombs and bullets in order to try to win the political argument," he said. With central London traffic in disarray and many commuters trying to reach their offices on foot the economic cost of the explosion was put at millions of pounds. About 400 Underground trains were halted and sent back to their depots as the system was emptied of tens of thousands of passengers in 19 minutes.

The bomb was planted in the men's toilet between platforms three and four yesterday morning. According to police, a man with an Irish accent rang the London office of Ulster Television at 8.15am giving a recognised codeword and saying there were bombs at main line stations. No details of any time of detonation or individual station were given.

Police were told of the warning at 8.20am. The bomb exploded at 8.29am as one train was pulling alongside one of the platforms and another had arrived a few minutes earlier. Police and transport officials put into operation emergency procedures which have been used three times across the London transport system in the past year. The explosion blew shattered glass 40 feet across the tracks and wrenched a metal-framed door off its hinges.

Conductor's heroism, page 2

Bellamy joins last plea to save Twyford Down

BY MICHAEL DYNES AND MICHAEL MCCARTHY

ELEVEN of the most senior figures in conservation make a final appeal today for the last section of the M3 to be built in a tunnel under Twyford Down, Hampshire, to save one of the most protected landscapes in England.

In a letter to *The Times*, a copy of which has been delivered to John Major, the 11 signatories, including David Bellamy, of the Royal Society for Nature Conservation, ask the government not to preside over "destruction of an area of quite extraordinary conservation and archaeological value".

The letter will be accompanied today by a large-scale protest by Friends of the Earth and the Twyford Down Association to mark the expiry at midnight tonight of the legal restriction on entry by the contractors to one of the two sites of special scientific interest. From tomorrow, with the required four months' notice having been given, the contractors will be free to begin work on the tunnel.

Today Suzanne Dlouck, aged 36, and her daughter Lisa, aged nine, of Wroughton, Wiltshire, celebrate their ninth and second official birthdays respectively. Both were born on Leap Year's Day.

If you let your hair down and took off your glasses, you could be quite cute



SAS men froze to death in Iraqi desert

BY MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

DETAILS of the courageous last few hours of four SAS men who died behind Iraqi lines in the Gulf war were disclosed at inquests in Oxford yesterday. One SAS man described how he had carried the body of a comrade for more than 24 hours to prevent it falling into the hands of the Iraqis.

Two of the men froze to death in appalling weather conditions. The other two were shot in firefights with Iraqi troops.

The first official details of the events that led to the deaths of the soldiers emerged at the inquest hearings which were held in tight security. All the SAS witnesses spoke from behind a screen and none of their names was divulged. One key witness was unable to attend because he is still recovering from injuries sustained in the war.

The two who died from hypothermia were Lance Corporal Stephen Lane, aged 27, and Sergeant Vincent Phillips, aged 36. Both were married. Their companions, who died from gunshot wounds were Corporal David Denbury, aged 26, and Private Robert Consiglio, aged 24. Neither was married.

Corporal Denbury's body was the only one brought back by the SAS. The other three were returned by the Iraqis under the auspices of the International Red Cross after the war.

During the inquest on Corporal Denbury, born in Newport, Gwent, the SAS witness said he carried the dead man's body back to the patrol base. Corporal Denbury met his death during an exchange with the enemy on February 21. The witness said: "He called my name. I saw that he had been hit."

Air Commodore Anthony Balfour, a pathologist, told the inquest that Corporal Denbury had died from a single bullet in the chest. "I would have expected the wound to have been fatal within a matter of minutes," he said. Corporal Denbury was awarded a posthumous Military Medal.

Lance Corporal Lane had been in a two-man team on a Continued on page 16, col 8

TODAY IN
THE TIMES

RISE
TALENTS



The designers
knitting
their way
to success
Saturday
Review

FALLING
STARS



Does the
Michelin
Guide need
a retreat?
Weekend Times
Page 1

SINKING
FEELINGS



John Julius
Norwich
questions
plans to close
Venice churches
Page 12

Ulster talks to resume

Leaders of the four main constitutional parties in Northern Ireland have agreed that formal talks on the province's future should begin as soon as possible. Their statement, suggested for the first time that they were in favour of the talks resuming before the general election.

Bridges rebuilt, page 4

Centre points

The Liberal Democrats are wooing Conservative voters to achieve 20 per cent support for the first time according to a Gallup poll for *The Daily Telegraph*. Labour had a half-point lead over the Tories with 37.5 per cent. Page 2

Iraq repods

Iraq sent a letter to the UN just before a security council deadline for the destruction of Scud factories expired. Page 10
Leading article, page 13

Care order

The army major's wife who ran over and killed his lover was sent to a psychiatric hospital after admitting manslaughter. She will be under supervision for a year. Page 3

Mother free

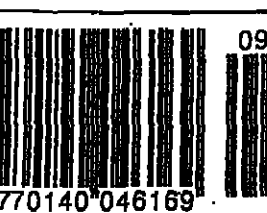
A woman jailed for drowning her six-week-old son was freed after the appeal court ruled her murder conviction was unsafe. Page 3

Sale scandal

Senior Communist party, defence and government officials have been implicated in an illicit billion rouble scheme to privatise a Moscow airport. Page 7

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1X

Caesar's dating puzzle leaps the years

BY NICK NUTTALL
TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

IF Gioacchino Rossini were still alive he might be forgiven for describing as premature celebrations to mark his 200th birthday. Indeed the Italian composer could quite legitimately claim to be 48 years old, despite being born in 1792.

Along with about 60,000 Britons, Rossini was a leap year baby, born on February 29 and, unlike people celebrating birthdays annually, he appeared to cheat time. That select company has become associated with some curious behaviour which strikes a chill in the hearts of confirmed bachelors and misogynists. For tradition dictates that on this day women can make marriage proposals to men.

The concept of the leap century was also introduced so that only centuries that could be divided by 400 were leap years. Consequently 1800 and 1900 were not leap years, which explains why

Caesar. While most of his countrymen seemed content to build roads, take baths and suppress the odd uprising, Caesar tried to come to terms with the news that the Earth does not go round the Sun in a neat 365 or 366-day cycle but instead takes 365 days, five hours, 48 minutes and 45.9747 seconds. Without swift action, by AD150 Christmas would be falling in autumn and Easter in the winter time.

The leap year solution, proposed in 46BC by Sosigenes, an Egyptian astronomer, was to make every fourth year 366 days and lose a day from intervening years. The system was revised by Emperor Augustus and Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 to create the modern calendar.

The concept of the leap century was also introduced so that only centuries that could be divided by 400 were leap years. Consequently 1800 and 1900 were not leap years, which explains why

Leap year confessions, page 12

Most use Feb 29th
to harmonize the
calendar with
the solar year.



I find my own way.



PURE GENIUS.

Bomb victims describe terror of blast that once again brought massive disruption to London

Bravery of railwayman praised after blast

BY PETER VICTOR

A TRAIN conductor was praised for his bravery at London Bridge station yesterday after he went to the aid of a man who was in the lavatory where the bomb had been planted when it went off.

Simon Gibb, the conductor, said: "I had just got off my train from Littlehampton on platform 12 when I heard a dull thud. I rushed over to platforms three and four. I went into the gents toilets which is on the same level as platform three and four and found this man staggering around. He had cuts all over his face and his lips were three times the normal size. I escorted him out of the toilet and sat him down on the platform where I gave him what first aid I could. I told him that he wouldn't win any beauty contests for a while which made him smile a little.

"There was another man lying on the platform outside the toilet who was severely injured. There was blood coming from his head and I could see cuts to his face. The toilets were completely blown apart."

Sir Bob Reid, British Rail's chairman, described Mr Gibb as a hero for risking his life in helping the man from the lavatory.

The 8.17am train from Charing Cross to Orpington was waiting at platform four when the bomb, planted in one of two lavatory cubicles between platforms three and four, went off. Windows in the lavatory train shattered showering passengers with glass.

Hubert Cranmer, aged 79, was walking to the lavatories when he was blown off his feet by the blast. He landed six inches from the edge of the platform. "I was knocked through the air like the man on the flying trapeze," he said. "I'm not a religious man but by gosh I was lucky. I'm not sure about everything that happened. They say I blacked out for about two minutes."

Mr Cranmer, of Bealey, Kent, said: "When I came to I could see the train windows had been blown in. People were wandering about. There was no panic, everyone seemed very calm, but I couldn't hear properly. I saw a few people with blood running down their faces but I didn't know where I was." He was treated for shock.

Andy Anderson, production editor with the *Weekend Financial Times*, said that the bomb went off after many people from the Orpington train had left the platform. "A train pulled in 15 seconds after the blast — if it had been a bit earlier then the casualties would have been a lot worse."

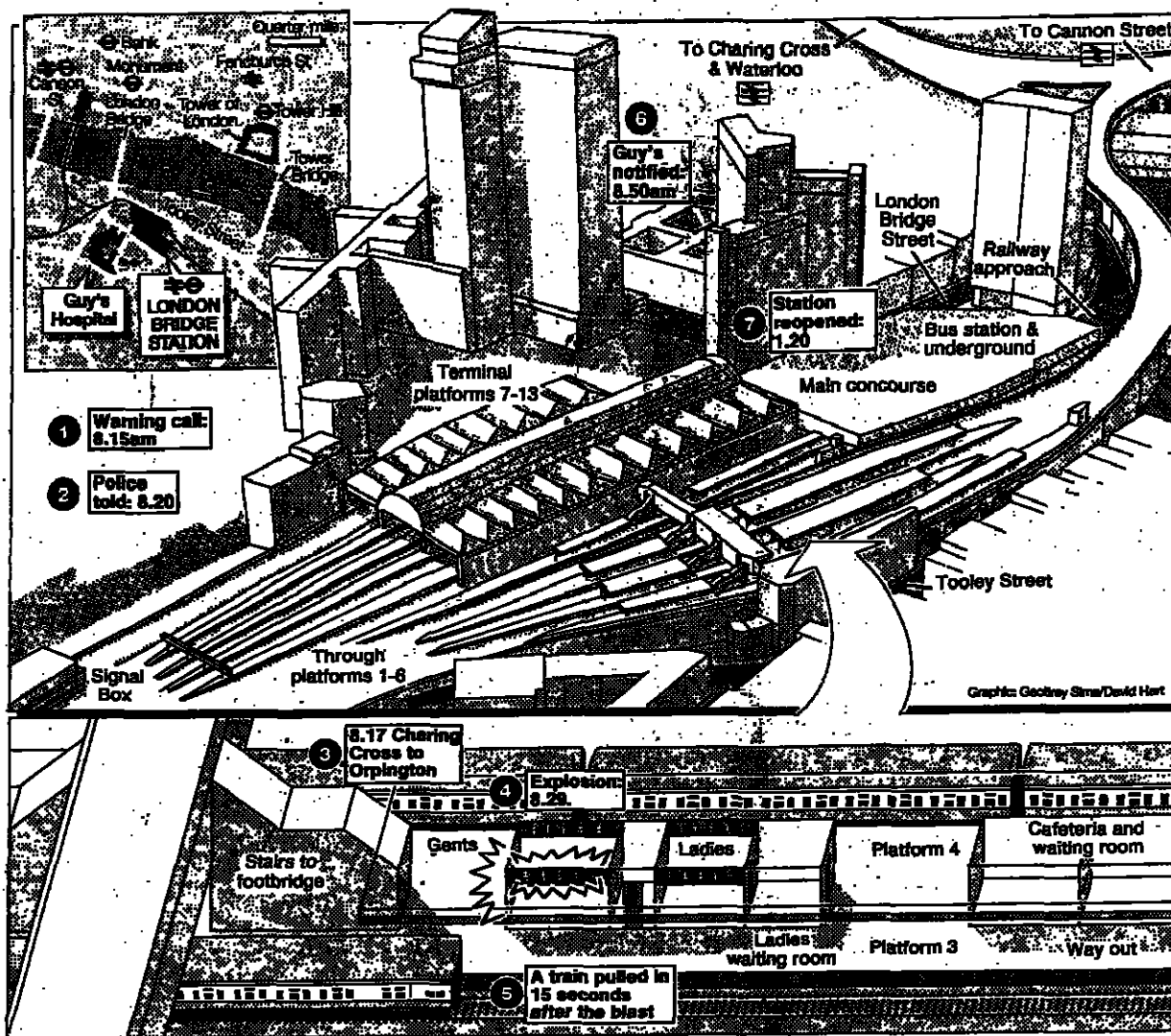
He had just walked past the lavatories when the bomb went off. "It was quite calm apart from a few young girls who were

screaming. I saw four or five people lying on the platform, including one man who wasn't moving. There was so much noise and filth it was difficult to tell how bad the injuries were. But most people were picking themselves up. Lots had blood dripping from their noses and superficial cuts. There were people getting off trains in total commuter mode, glancing at the injured and just walking straight past."

Ralph Oliver, a track maintenance worker aged 38, ran for his life from the explosion. "I was just walking past the gents toilets when there was this enormous explosion," he said. "Glass shot straight through the platform. The gents toilet went up and there was this terrible smell of gas. A train had just gone out. We started clearing people off the platform. A couple of girls in their twenties seemed in a pretty bad way. There was a bloke who looked badly injured. He was covered in blood."

Glen McClelland, aged 27, was discharged from Guy's Hospital after treatment for cuts and shock. He had been sitting on a bench close to the lavatories where the bomb was planted. Mr McClelland, a computer engineer from East Finchley, said: "There was a massive explosion. Shards of glass and other debris showered over the top of the train between me and platform four. Instinctively, I turned away from the blast but something cut me behind my ear."

Alexandra Hussey and Katie Breton, both aged 13 and pupils at the Italia Conti Stage School, in central London, had arranged to meet on platform four on their way to school. Each feared that the other had been injured. They only discovered they were both safe when they arrived at school.



Some injured walked to Guy's

BY BILL FROST

BLEEDING, bruised, and deafened by the blast, several of the victims of yesterday's bomb attack walked the quarter mile from London Bridge station to Guy's hospital and admitted themselves to the accident and emergency unit.

Less mobile commuters, who had suffered shock, concussion and abrasions, were ferried to Guy's by a shuttle service of ambulances, alerted shortly after 8.45am. Of the 28 people treated, four suffered what were described as moderately serious wounds.

Psychiatric staff were called in to counsel the walking wounded. "The team will begin to talk them through the trauma. The victims are still in shock but they will all have a reaction, particularly when they begin to read about what

happened to them," said a hospital spokesman.

Major-General Norman Kirby, director of accident and emergency services at Guy's, was surprised and relieved at the low casualty toll. "Normally, with this sort of blast one would expect gross injuries: limbs to be torn off and mutilated. They are so lucky to have survived what could have been a really disastrous explosion," he said.

"One man" suffered wounds to his eyes and face, but his sight is not in jeopardy. Another has face and jaw wounds and will require dental surgery. The third has face injuries and the fourth man suffered back and chest injuries. We expect they will be with us for about a week."

Hospital staff discharged most victims

Disruption puts capital on its feet

BY TIM JONES

LONDONERS and commuters to the capital yesterday refused to let disruption from the London Bridge bomb stop them going about their business.

Some journeys that normally take an hour turned into endurance tests four times as long. A lounge suit army tramped the pavements towards the city centre as buses groaning under the weight of passengers, passed by.

With 15 British Rail stations and the entire Underground system closed on police advice, thousands of commuters were stranded far from their destinations.

BR said that the situation could have been worse as most of the 500,000 who commute into the capital on up to 1,000 trains between 7am and 9.30am had arrived by the time the decision

was taken, at 9.10am, to close stations.

The brunt of the disruption was borne by travellers on later trains that were stopped at stations outside the main termini and by the 300,000 passengers who could not come in on the Underground.

A few gave up, but many walked for more than five miles to their offices or shared cabs. Others formed long queues for buses or hitched lifts from motorists. Thousands more waited for up to two hours until suburban Underground stations resumed operations.

The Association of London Authorities estimated that the disruption will cost businesses in the capital more than £8 million in lost work.

The Automobile Association said that because most people had not been aware of the bomb before leaving home, it had not been responsible for a huge jam that had traffic at a standstill during the morning in the Aldwych and Holborn areas. That had been caused by a traffic light fault.

More disruption arose on the Victoria Embankment, where army bomb disposal experts exploded an unattended briefcase.

One secretary, Catherine Stott, walked from Marble Arch to London Bridge to get to work. "My feet are killing me and I will need the whole weekend to recover," she said. "Central London was mayhem. I must have seen a thousand cabs and not one of them was empty."

By mid-afternoon, all mainline stations, except Charing Cross and the south side of London Bridge, which had restricted services, were running normally.

Bombers may try to hit election

Senior political figures on the campaign trail could become targets for the IRA, writes Stewart Tendler

Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist experts now have little doubt that the IRA will try to capitalise on the general election. The question is whether they will continue the tempo of their current campaign with sporadic attacks like yesterday's, increase the strikes or search for one devastating blow.

Special Branch officers, responsible for the protection of political VIPs, have been debating how the IRA might take advantage of the election. Few officers doubt that the Home Secretary's hope yesterday that the IRA keeps violence out of the hustings will prove to be wishful thinking.

The drive for information on IRA intentions is certain to intensify in the next few weeks, as the future responsibility for assessing terrorist threats is being reviewed within the Home Office. A decision is expected soon on whether MI5 should take over the police intelligence role on the mainland.

The 1992 general election will be the first since 1974 with a full scale and long-running IRA mainland campaign in operation. By the time of the 1979 general election the IRA was already turning towards 'spectacular attacks rather than constant campaigns.'

Now they have turned back to a mixture of strategies rarely allowing a few weeks to pass without an attack from an active service unit thought to be securely established somewhere in the London suburbs.

Special Branch will commit many of the 100 or so officers responsible for protection to the main figures in the election supported by other officers in London and the provinces. Faced with the prospect that VIP targets will be well protected, the IRA could probe for weaknesses in unexpected places.

The London Bridge bomb demonstrates the ease with which the active service unit can cause severe difficulties at the minimum of risk or exposure. The attack was the fourth attempt to snarl up the London commuter system with a tactic which began almost a year ago.

Last February bombs at Paddington and Victoria stations killed one man. In December mainline stations and the London Underground were shut down by attacks.

Although police and transport authorities have become well versed in handling the emergencies the IRA have varied their tactic by moving from the beginning of the week to a Friday. Their use of a blanket warning leaves the authorities with little choice but to close down the system wholesale.

Poll shows surge in Lib Dem support

Liberal Democrats have taken support from the Conservatives and Labour to break through the 20 per cent barrier for the first time, according to the latest opinion poll (Sheila Gunn writes).

The Gallup poll in *The Daily Telegraph* today shows the two main political parties virtually level, with a surge in support for the Liberal Democrats. The poll puts Labour at 37.5 per cent, Conservative 37 per cent and Liberal Democrats 20 per cent.

It confirms the pattern of other polls this month that indicate a hung parliament, with no party winning a clear majority in the general election. Until Paddy Ashdown's admission of an affair with his secretary, the Liberal Democrats had been scoring around 15 per cent.

The party's surge in support has also stopped either the Conservatives or Labour recording support consistently around 40 per cent.

Other national opinion polls published this month also showed Labour and Conservatives almost neck and neck. Labour's support has wavered between 37 and 42 per cent and the Conservatives between 38 and 40 per cent. The Liberal Democrats had swung between 15 and 19 per cent and the other parties scored four or five points.

The latest Gallup poll was taken between February 19 and 25, involving 1,850 adults in more than 150 districts.

Spens ruling is delayed

A decision on whether Lord Spens should be formally acquitted of charges of fraud and false accounting arising out of the Guinness takeover of Distillers has been deferred. Mr Justice Henry had been due to rule yesterday on Lord Spens's application for an acquittal. A decision is expected next week.

The Serious Fraud Office decided not to proceed against the former merchant banker after his trial was halted when psychiatrists advised Mr Justice Henry that his co-defendant Roger Seelig could no longer defend himself.

Fire kills three

Three young children died after fire swept through their home in Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire, yesterday. They were a boy and girl aged three and a boy aged 18 months. The fire was believed to have started when foam-filled furniture caught light in the living room. Neighbours were woken shortly after 3am when the children's babysitter, thought to be an aunt, discovered the fire. Firemen in breathing gear carried the children out of the house but were not able to resuscitate them.

Moving bridge

Three men will today coax a 260ft, 2,000-ton bridge along a two-mile stretch of the M4, on the English approach to the Severn Bridge. The section was closed last night for the 18-hour operation. The bridge will be lowered onto three driverless trailers which will be guided by remote control one-and-a-half miles along the motorway to a layby at Aust, Avon. There it will be demolished.

Travel firms eye oldies' gold

BY HARVEY ELLIOTT, TRAVEL CORRESPONDENT

THE dawning realisation that "seasoned consumers" — the latest politically acceptable way of describing people of more mature years — are not only increasing in number but have more than their share of spare cash has finally hit the travel industry.

After years of assiduously wooing the 25 to 34-year-old group through brochures and advertisements showing only lithe young things, the leisure industry is switching tactics in an attempt to attract the oldies — and their money.

British Airways Holidays surprised itself with the discovery that virtually half the number of long haul travellers were aged over 45, while the number of people under 34 was dropping year by year. The over-45s made up 46 per cent of travellers on the airline's Worldwide holiday programme last year, compared with only 37 per cent in 1990. Early retirement, higher discretionary income and greater propensity to travel, they said, heralded the "coming of the grey traveller".

The British Tourist Authority has also espoused the cause of older people after studying a research paper produced in the United States. Between now and 2000, it learned, the population would grow by seven per cent and the ranks of the middle aged (from 35 to 54 years) would go up by 28 per cent and reach 81 million.

The youth market is shrinking rapidly, with seven million fewer in the 25 to 34-year-old group. The spending power of these youngsters will drop by \$38 billion.

But he warned against patronising future customers. "We must beware using terms like old and elderly in promotional activities. Research shows that 80 per cent of people over 40 feel 15 years younger than their actual age. They like to be portrayed as attractive and vital," he said.

Places like Florida are very good at selling the idea that retirement should both be fun and exciting. They offer the enticing prospect of a new life in a "carefree adult condominium community". But he warned against patronising future customers. "We must beware using terms like old and elderly in promotional activities. Research shows that 80 per cent of people over 40 feel 15 years younger than their actual age. They like to be portrayed as attractive and vital," he said.

David Howell, a former cabinet minister, says in a foreword to *One Nation 2000*, which lists 33 MPs on its cover, that "the overriding concern of national leadership in the years towards 2000 must be to bind our society together". The pamphlet expresses concern about "ever-rising crime, mindless vandalism, weak neighbourhood loyalty" and says that the guiding principle for the next decade must be "to create a sense of national unity which is vigorous enough to

tract the oldies — and their money."

What we eat, what we wear, where, how and when we travel, what we buy and why we buy it, and what we do with our leisure time — all this is liable to change. Older people, he said, develop interests in history, archaeology, the arts and other subjects. They are health conscious and want fitness centres as well as medical services "which don't break the bank".

Places like Florida are very good at selling the idea that retirement should both be fun and exciting. They offer the enticing prospect of a new life in a "carefree adult condominium community". But he warned against patronising future customers. "We must beware using terms like old and elderly in promotional activities. Research shows that 80 per cent of people over 40 feel 15 years younger than their actual age. They like to be portrayed as attractive and vital," he said.

Travel, *Saturday Review* page 26

National unity a priority, MPs say

BY ROBIN OAKLEY, POLITICAL EDITOR

THE next Conservative government should make a priority of restoring social cohesion, according to a pamphlet published yesterday by the One Nation group of MPs.

The document from the largely centre-left backbench group, which claims 24 supporters on the government front bench, warns that future problems in society are likely to come not from organised labour but from "the misery of the disconnected in our society".

David Howell, a former cabinet minister, says in a foreword to *One Nation 2000*, which lists 33 MPs on its cover, that "the overriding concern of national leadership in the years towards 2000 must be to bind our society together". The pamphlet expresses concern about "ever-rising crime, mindless vandalism, weak neighbourhood loyalty" and says that the guiding principle for the next decade must be "to create a sense of national unity which is vigorous enough to

resist the drive to anarchy on the one hand and the predations of selfish libertarianism on the other."

On the economic front, it appears to back the creation of an independent Bank of England by suggesting that monetary management should be distanced from politics. "A more independent central monetary authority in Britain may well be inevitable..."

Warning that the scope for extra spending is limited, it suggests that if a modern transport infrastructure is to be established, "resources will have to be both raised privately and hypothecated by charges and pollution levies" allowing people to exchange delays for higher quality transport, but at a price.

Saying that the millions of new shareholders do not feel involved in a new society, the MPs call for the capital ownership democracy to be given more substance by promoting all forms of personal savings.

Politics, page 5

QE2, LATESAVER Experience the very special world of QE2 as she carries you first to explore New York before heading for Fort Lauderdale, America's sunshine capital. Sail on to visit four of the Caribbean's most enchanting islands - St. Thomas, Martinique, Barbados and St. Maarten. Fly home from New York. Altogether an irresistible combination, particularly with prices for this 17-day Latesaver holiday, from only £1395 - an amazing saving of up to £600.

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Politics, page 5

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Police chief accuses BBC *Rough Justice* programme of misrepresenting facts

Mother jailed for drowning baby son is set free

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

A MOTHER jailed for life for drowning her baby son was freed yesterday after her conviction for murder was ruled unsafe and unsatisfactory.

The appeal court, which had earlier quashed the conviction against Jacqueline Fletcher, aged 28, had been told that no record was kept of an interview in which she had apparently confessed the killing to a woman police officer. The six-week-old baby was originally thought to have been a cot death victim.

After the judgment, Peter Joslin, chief constable of Warwickshire, criticised the BBC *Rough Justice* programme which had investigated the case, accusing it and the BBC of "misrepresenting the facts". He said that the interview had happened before tape recording was introduced as part of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act.

The interview had not been conducted by some hard bitten member of the crime squad but by a woman officer who had herself just returned to work after the birth of her second child, Mr Joslin said on BBC radio. "We in the police are entitled to a little justice."

Miss Fletcher said: "I'm just glad to be out. I want to thank all the people who worked for me, including the *Rough Justice* team." David Jessel, the programme's presenter, said: "It is this sort of case which makes up most of the bog-standard miscarriages of justice. One just wonders how many other Jacqueline Fletchers are out there."

Lord Lane said that misleading medical evidence heard by the jury and failures by the police to follow correct procedures after Miss Fletcher's arrest and interrogation had caused the court deep concern.

Lord Lane, sitting with Mr Justice Rose and Mr Justice Potts, said that after her arrest, Miss Fletcher denied the allegation in the presence of her solicitor and a police inspector, but then she had asked to be left alone with a woman police officer to talk "woman to woman". She had then, inexplicably, confessed to drowning her son and repeated the admission in a full interview, Lord Lane said.

But no record was made of what was said during the interview and no mention made in any record to that effect. He said the court did

not want to cast blame on the police or the officer for the clear breach of guidance set out in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act.

Miss Fletcher, of Nuneaton, Warwickshire, was jailed for life by Birmingham Crown Court in September 1988. Her son had died in 1984 in the flat where she lived while the child's father was in jail.

Miss Fletcher was brought to trial because in 1987 her landlady allegedly heard her tell another baby son: "If you don't shut up, I will do the same what I done to the other one." The main evidence against her was her confession in which she described how the baby struggled under water.

Her oldest child, Jason, aged ten, has been looked after by her parents while her third child, Mark, has been adopted. Ewen Smith, her solicitor, said that it was a great injustice. "The family have suffered enormously over the last three years. Miss Fletcher has had to live with the trauma of being blamed for killing her child. She always protested her innocence. She is entitled to compensation and we will be taking steps to see she is looked after."



Jacqueline Fletcher leaving the Appeal Court after being freed yesterday

Wife who killed rival is given year's probation

FROM IAN MURRAY IN VERDEN, LOWER SAXONY

CHRISTINE Dryland, the army wife who killed her husband's lover by running her over, was yesterday sent for in-patient treatment for up to a year at a London psychiatric hospital by a general court-martial in Germany.

The court decided to make her subject to a Rhine army probation order, which means that she will be under supervision for only a year. Dryland had admitted manslaughter due to diminished responsibility. The court decided on leniency after hearing of Dryland's distress at the love affair of her husband, Major Anthony Dryland. The sentence is subject to confirmation.

Evidence yesterday showed that Major Dryland had lived a lie for months, pretending during his affair with a German woman that he still loved his wife. Dryland said that, after learning "the appalling truth", she had tried to kill herself.

The court listened to a recording made by military police after Dryland ran over and killed Marika Sparfeldt, her husband's lover. In it, Dryland said: "I realised that he had been lying, so cold and cruel. I felt I was going to pieces... it was just a nightmare... the cold, hard cruelty of what he has done to me. I couldn't stand it any more. I thought: 'There is only one way out of this and I have got to do it this time. I have got to kill myself.'"

"I just couldn't see anything else because I had tried

everything else. I couldn't even think like myself any more."

The interview showed that Dryland became suspicious that her husband was having an affair on Boxing Day, 1990, just before he was due to go to the Gulf. She had insisted on going with him and their two sons to the riding club where he was in a fun ride. She said: "My husband ignored us completely. He was surrounded by all of these women, horsey friends, who were literally, physically falling all over him. He was with Marika, though I didn't know her then, sitting very close and drinking out of each other's glasses."

Dryland said that she still did not want to believe her husband was having an affair and put his conduct down to drink and worries about going to the Gulf.

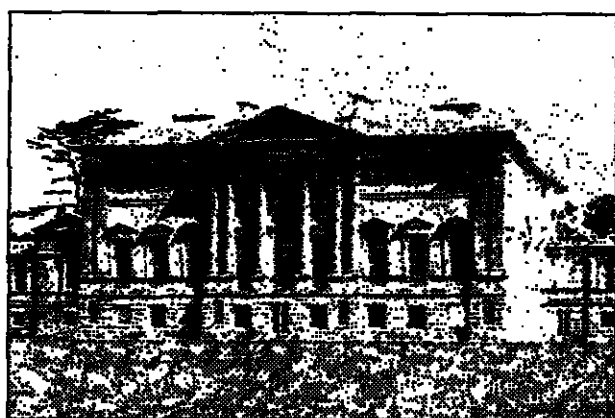
However letters and a love diary found later in Frau Sparfeldt's flat revealed that in the weeks before Christmas she and the major were all but living together, going out almost daily. In one of the 47 letters he sent her from the Gulf he wrote: "these times have been magical."

After the Gulf war, the major resumed the affair, the court was told. Ann Currow, QC, for the defence, said: "He was living a lie at home. This must have made him intolerable to live with. Only three minutes' walk away were the stables where he was in the arms of Marika."

Dryland said that on the day of the killing she had gone to the stables to remind her husband to drive the babysitter home, and saw him and Frau Sparfeldt together. "I realised he was still seeing her and having an affair... I just started shouting and swearing," she said.

She said her husband pulled her away and she decided to kill herself, and repeatedly drove her Saab into his Mercedes. She could not remember seeing her husband or seeing Frau Sparfeldt and running her over.

Miss Currow produced scientific evidence to refute statements by the major that his wife had repeatedly driven over his lover's body.



Textbook Georgian: Wardour Castle in Wiltshire

Mansion finds a buyer at last

BY RACHEL KELLY, PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

NEARLY two years after it was put on the market for £2.75 million, Wardour Castle, near Tisbury in Wiltshire, may have found a buyer.

Although contracts have not yet been exchanged on the 18th century Palladian mansion, the agent Lane Fox said yesterday that it had received a formal offer on the property, the former home of Cranborne Chase school, whose governors are selling the house.

The price is likely to be considerably less than £1 million. When the house was auctioned last December, it failed to reach its reserve of £950,000. The buyers of the

house, once the seat of the Arundell family, are believed to want it partly for residential use. The news will delight local people, who feared it might become a football training centre or the headquarters of a religious cult.

The house is a textbook Georgian mansion. It was designed by James Paine and built between 1770 and 1776. According to the Pevsner architectural guide, it has "the most glorious Georgian interior in Wiltshire", which includes a circular staircase.

There is a huge chapel in the west wing, and in the east wing is a kitchen so large that one of the Arundell ladies is said to have had her first riding lesson around the kitchen table.

Lawyers question poll tax clamping

BY LOUISE HIDALGO

EXPERTS have questioned the legality of wheelclamping the cars of poll tax defaulters. Leeds city council is due to vote next week on introducing the scheme in an attempt to help recoup £22 million in community charge debts.

Kerry Underwood, Law Society spokesperson on the community charge, has warned that councils would be acting outside the "spirit, and probably the letter, of the law" if they clamped defaulters' cars to pressure or embarrass them into paying their poll tax arrears.

"Bailiffs are empowered by the courts to seize goods in order to raise money to meet outstanding debts. They are not, however, empowered to carry out a campaign of harassment."

The Automobile Association has also voiced doubts about the road safety implications of the plan, saying clamped vehicles could cause an obstruction in emergencies. An AA spokeswoman said: "We are surprised, when wheelclamping is such a grey area in terms of the law, even in instances of illegal parking, to see it being used in this way."

Leeds city council, which intends to release defaulters' cars only when the full poll tax has been paid, or to sell them at auction to recoup the debt, has yet to draw up guidelines for bailiffs on

when and how to use clamping. "The legislation governing enforcement of community charge is widely drawn," a spokesman said. "Clamping a non-payer's car would be the first step towards recovering unpaid poll-tax demands."

Lawyers from the Poll Tax Legal Group said that councils could be opening themselves up to "serious problems", particularly over establishing ownership of vehicles. Rob Manson, the group's director of legal research, said: "A bailiff would only be justified in interfering with, or removing a motor vehicle, if they can prove it belongs to the charge-payer against whom they have been instructed to seize goods. The onus would be on them to prove ownership, or they could face criminal proceedings."

Councils would have access to car registration records held at Swansea licensing centre, but the registered keeper of a vehicle would not necessarily be the same person as the owner.

Two local authorities, Kirklees in West Yorkshire and Stockport in Greater Manchester, have begun using wheelclamps to immobilise cars before tow-trucks arrive to stop owners driving off and, in some cases, injuring council officials.

Oxford rower had cancer

BY MICHAEL HORSNELL

JOHN Hebbes, the Oxford University oarsman who collapsed and died last Tuesday while training on the Thames for a place in the Boat Race team, was suffering from an undiagnosed cancer which led to a heart attack.

A post mortem examination has concluded that Mr Hebbes, aged 19, died from natural causes and the coroner will not hold an inquest, it was disclosed yesterday.

A police spokesman said that if he had seen a doctor, the tumour might have been discovered. "But because he was such a fit lad and felt OK, he didn't feel the need to visit a GP, even though the medical condition would have produced some symptoms."

The 6ft 8ins tall oarsman, nicknamed "Doughboy" by his university friends because of his appetite, was a second-year Oriel College mathemat-

ics undergraduate from Kingston upon Thames. He collapsed in a practice boat clutching his chest during a training session.

The police spokesman said that a pathologist had concluded Mr Hebbes died from cardiac arrest hastened by a condition known as ganglioneuroma, related to a liver tumour. "It could have been dealt with quite easily with no harmful effects," he said.

Hebbes had been training for the Boat Race since he was 15. He was a member of the Oxford University rowing team and had been selected for the 1992 Boat Race.

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

Mustique — is paradise lost?

Diana puts on a Noel Coward compact disc. "You know what's so wonderful about Mustique?" she says. "If you stay here long enough you'll meet everyone in the world. Everyone, simply everyone, comes here in the end. Last night Diana had



given a murder party. Such fun. Pierre Marais — you know he's a retired general? — came in a naval uniform and had made a row of medals from ribbon and silver foil. It was a scream... Russell Miller, in The Sunday Times Magazine tomorrow

Conspiracy theory MP is branded a whinger

BY ALAN HAMILTON

A CONSERVATIVE MP was branded as a whinger yesterday when he took up much of the slack in Commons debating time in an effort to clear his name.

John Browne, who represents Winchester, was suspended from the House for 20 days in 1990 after an investigation by the select committee on members' interests ruled that he had been less than fully forthcoming on his outside earnings. Having won a place in the ballot to introduce a Friday motion, Mr Browne seized the opportunity to complain that he and his constituents had been victims of a grand and deliberate injustice, a show trial, and a conspiracy.

Since his suspension he has been delected by his constituency party. Yesterday, he refuted allegations that he had made £50,000 which he had not declared from a company he part-owned. "There was no financial gain to me, and no one was harmed," he said.

He alleged that documents stolen from his company and personal files had been used against him, that an Obser-

ver journalist who wrote about him had a close working relationship with Dale Campbell-Savours, a Labour member of the select committee which sentenced him, that he was threatened by Richard Ryder, the government chief whip, and had been pressured by, among others, Sir Geoffrey Howe and Kenneth Baker.

Meetings with those party luminaries confirmed his worst thoughts that Labour were out for the blood of a Tory MP. He also said that false publicity over the break-



Browne: impassioned defence fell on deaf ears

up of his marriage and an "acrimonious" divorce case had had a detrimental effect on his standing in Commons and constituency.

Mr Browne's impassioned defence fell on deaf ears. Dennis Skinner, Labour MP for Bolton, told him: "I know what's really getting to your craw — the fact that you have been done when a lot of your friends are making money as well." Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, chairman of the select committee, reminded Mr Browne that he had made no request to call witnesses before or during his original hearing.

John Fraser, from the Opposition benches, said that Mr Browne's epitaph would record him as a "public schoolboy, Guards officer, banker, MP and whinger". John MacGregor, leader of the House, emphasised that there had been a free vote at the end of the original debate on Mr Browne's case and that now was not the time to consider his complaints on committee procedure.

The case collapsed. Mr Browne had little choice but to withdraw the motion and the debate ended without a vote.

Tyneside riots report urges changes

Probation officers 'are out of touch'

BY PETER DAVENPORT

A REPORT ordered by senior probation officers in the aftermath of last year's Tyneside riots has strongly criticised the service.

The 11-page document concludes that officers were out of touch with communities in the Meadow Well area of North Shields and in Newcastle upon Tyne's west end, both scenes of violence during five days of unrest in September.

Mike Worthington, Northumbria's chief probation officer, said yesterday that his staff had become too office-bound and ought to be more involved in the community which they served. A government directive changing work practices over the past five years had meant that probation officers had become too tied to their desks.

"As we have gone down this road we have begun to lose touch with the communities where these offenders live. The report is very critical of our practices and I make no apologies for that. It's something I think all 55 probation areas in England and Wales

will have to address, because they have all been pushed in the same direction."

In the wake of the rioting Mr Worthington asked the chief probation officers responsible for north Tyneside and Newcastle to prepare a report to discover what lessons could be learnt.

He said yesterday: "We now realise we need to be more visible on the Meadow Well and in the west end. We need to have a better understanding and a lot more knowledge of the problems of people living there." There are 14 probation staff assigned to the city's west end and nine to the Meadow Well housing estate.

Mr Worthington said that the report also emphasised that the probation service needed to work more closely with agencies such as the police, social services and community groups. Despite the criticisms in the report, Mr Worthington said that he believed that the probation service was still doing a good job.

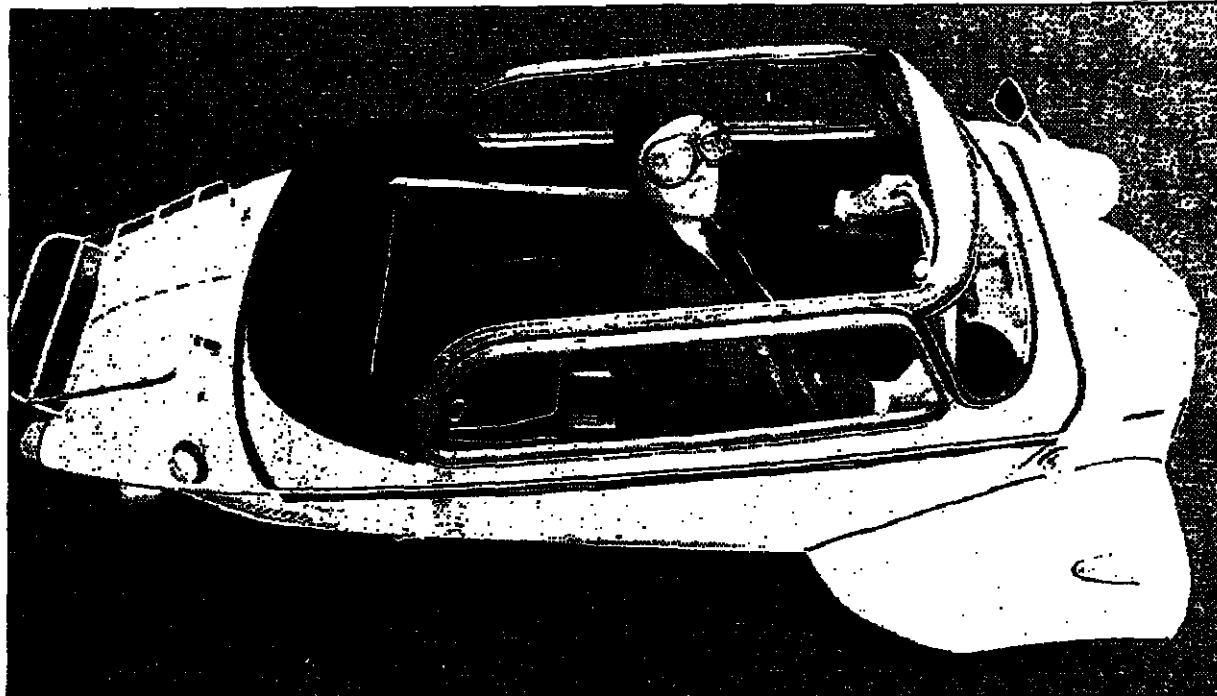
"We are not panicking.

Whatever our work methods, our effectiveness has increased. Of all the offenders from the Meadow Well and the west end who came under our supervision last year, 80 per cent completed their period without reconviction. "It's quite remarkable in the circumstances. It's a figure our staff can be proud of."

The report, still in draft form, is due to be released next week. Mr Worthington added yesterday that most people in places such as Meadow Well continued to lead decent and law-abiding lives against the odds. They were "fearful places".

"Our officers need to constantly remind themselves what it's like to live in such areas of sheer deprivation and disadvantage, where levels of unemployment and poverty are phenomenal."

He said that of the 516 offenders from the Meadow Well and the west end under probation service supervision, only 17 had full-time jobs. "It is almost impossible to take in that scale of unemployment, but it's a reality of life."



Taking to the air: a restored Messerschmitt KR200, built in 1959, has a trial run before its sale at an ADT auction at Blackbushe, Hampshire, on Monday. The aircraft-inspired car is expected to fetch over £6,000

Ulster leaders start to rebuild bridges

BY EDWARD GORMAN, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE leaders of the four main constitutional parties in Northern Ireland met for a private session of talks in Belfast yesterday to pave the way for a resumption of formal negotiations after the election.

The objective of the meeting, suggested by the prime minister when he met the

leaders at Downing Street recently, was to help build trust for another attempt at talks after the election, John Hume, SDLP leader, said. No significant progress is expected before then.

Unionists remain concerned about Labour's policy commitment to a united Ireland, in spite of an assurance

by Neil Kinnock on Thursday that any talks under a Labour government would not be designed to advance that cause.

There is also concern that the SDLP and the Irish government wish to place the Government of Ireland Act which facilitated partition in Ireland, on the agenda to balance possible amendment

of the republic's constitution which claims sovereignty over Northern Ireland.

Before yesterday's meeting, three of the political leaders held talks with the heads of the four main churches in Northern Ireland.

Sitting targets, Saturday Review, page 12

Prying drivers delay aid

POLICE yesterday attacked "rubber-necking" drivers for preventing ambulances reaching the victims of a series of motorway pile-ups in which one man died and more than 20 were injured.

Wreckage from at least 12 crashes blocked the south-bound carriageway of the M61 near Bolton, Greater Manchester, in thick, freezing fog during the morning rush hour. But police said that motorists in the north-bound lanes who slowed to look at the wrecks were involved in another series of accidents, delaying emergency vehicles.

"Visibility was down to 30 yards in places, yet people were paying more attention to the grief of others than their own driving," said Chief Inspector Neil Longden of the Greater Manchester police motorway unit. "Drivers were simply rubber-necking and staring across the carriageway at people who were trapped in vehicles. To say they were revelling in other people's misfortune sounds too strong, but that is what it boils down to."

The man who died, Philip Bullock of Hyde, Greater Manchester, was hit by a lorry after leaving his wrecked car.

Leading article, page 13

Seventh remand appeal lost

Lorain Osman, the Malaysian lawyer and businessman who has been in custody for six years awaiting extradition to Hong Kong to face theft and fraud charges, yesterday lost his latest attempt in the High Court to gain his freedom.

Rejecting his seventh application for habeas corpus, Lord Justice Woolf, sitting with Mr Justice Pill, said it had no merit. They also rejected his application for judicial review of the decision of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate in June 1987 to commit him to custody.

Mr Osman, aged 59, is accused of false accounting and receiving corrupt payments as chairman of Bumiputera Malaysian Finance over dealings with the Chinese-controlled Carian Group. He denies the charges.

Short wins in chess fightback

Nigel Short, of Britain, recovered from a poor start in the international chess tournament at Linares, Spain, when he defeated Ljubomir Ljubicevic, of Yugoslavia, in the fourth round. Short had only scored half a point from his first three games.

The overnight leader, Arthur Yusupov, formerly of the Soviet Union but now of Germany, lost to the Spaniard Miguel Illescas. Yusupov now shares the lead with the world champion Gary Kasparov, who drew with Viswanathan Anand, of India. Both have three points.

Shooting enquiry

An enquiry led by the assistant chief constable of Essex has been set up by the Police Complaints Authority into the shooting dead of a man who wounded a police officer and hijacked a driving instructor and his car at Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, on Thursday. The dead man was Barry Clutterham, aged 47, who lived in the town, police confirmed. The shot officer was under sedation yesterday.

Petrol spill

Four tons of petrol spilled into Cardiff docks yesterday when the tanker from which it was being unloaded ran into the quayside at Roath Dock in Cardiff Bay. Mechanical booms were used to contain the spill. The National Rivers Authority said that it would be some time before any effects on marine life were known.

Wife's plea

A husband found guilty of raping his wife was given an 18 month suspended sentence by Northampton crown court yesterday after his wife said that she did not want the trial to continue and wanted him back as a husband and father to their two young children. The man, aged 31, of Kettering, denied rape last August. The judge told him that he had escaped prison because of his wife's love.

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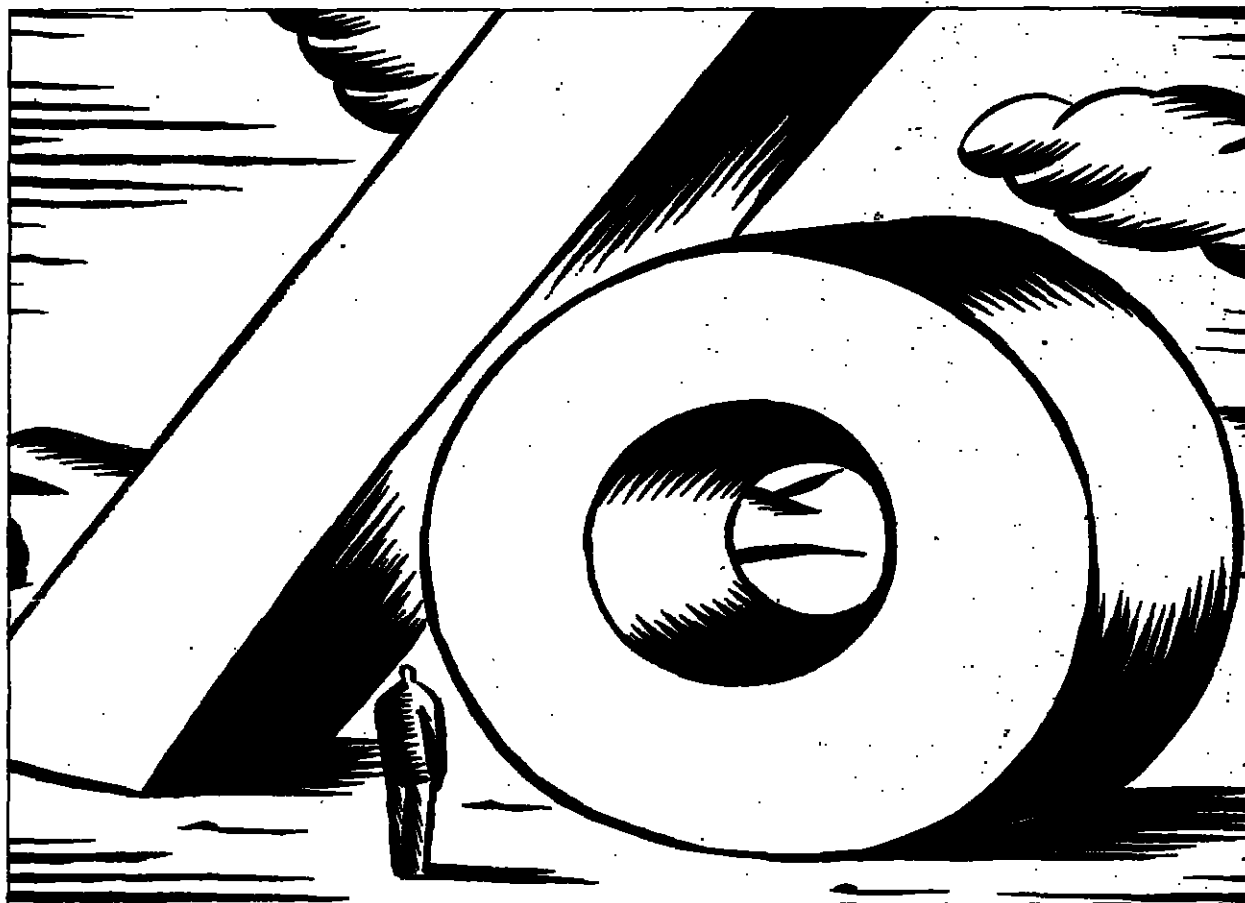
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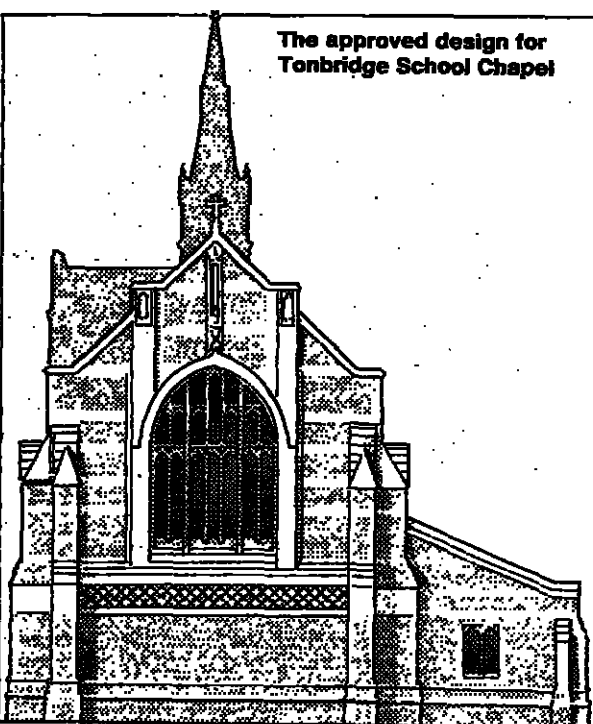
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Church to decide on school chapel

BY ALISON ROBERTS

GOVERNORS of Tonbridge School, Kent, have been granted planning permission to rebuild the school chapel, but are still waiting for consent from church authorities before the £7 million scheme can go ahead.

The design, by Donald Buttress, was submitted to the Chancellor of the Diocese, who must decide whether to grant the plans a faculty - the equivalent of listed building consent. Objections to the design from English Heritage and the borough council

have also been submitted to the church authorities.

David Hart-Dyke, clerk to the governors, said: "The people at English Heritage are great experts and they gave one or two pointers, but they did approve the design. I think people will be eternally grateful to the governors for spending this much money on the chapel."

The proposed design bears a strong resemblance to the original Edwardian chapel by Campbell Jones which was damaged by fire in 1988.

Tories launch Scottish campaign

Hurd and Baker lead defence of union

BY KERRY GILL

THE Conservatives' Scottish general election campaign effectively was launched yesterday when Douglas Hurd and Kenneth Baker delivered withering attacks on Labour's plans for a devolved parliament for Scotland.

Despite an opinion poll showing that almost 80 per cent of the public support parties in favour of some degree of home rule, they offered a robust defence of the present constitutional arrangements and refused to give any ground to devolution. The attempts by the foreign and home secretaries to bolster support for the union came as the Scottish Constitutional Convention, formed three years ago, met in Edinburgh to complete proposals for a Scottish parliament.

Mr Hurd and Mr Baker saved their fiercest criticism for Labour in the hope of sustaining increasing public doubts over how devolution would work. Mr Baker, whose Scottish party colleagues are overjoyed that the Scottish National Party is squeezing the Labour and Liberal Democrat vote, said: "I am delighted to see how the Scottish Labour party and the Scottish National Party are fighting like two ferrets in a sack."

Mr Baker said the Tories had managed to clarify the constitutional debate by pointing out the weaknesses in the nationalists' policy of independence in Europe, and in the Labour and Liberal hopes for devolution. The effect of splitting the Opposition, the Tories hope, would be to save their present nine Scottish seats and even make

gains at the election. Later Mr Hurd said: "Labour and the SNP have put forward detailed models for Scotland's future which are either misguided or fraudulent. I would at least give the SNP credit for sincerity." Labour's position was "more disingenuous and devious", he said. "They have two objectives. First, to take power in Scotland through supporting establishment of a devolved assembly. Second, to improve their chances of governing the UK by retaining arrangements at Westminster incompatible with devolution."

Mr Hurd continued to harry Labour with the "West Lothian question", first posed 15 years ago and still unanswered by Labour leaders. He said: "You cannot strip the Westminster Parliament of its right to legislate on most Scottish matters but then let Scots MPs determine those same areas of policy for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It is patently absurd and unfair. Labour is offering a fraudulent prospectus."

The visit by the ministers was the first in a number of pre-election forays over the border in which nine cabinet members will struggle to shore up party support and to warn that home rule would split the union. The Tories, according to the latest poll in *The Herald*, have remained relatively static at 22 per cent while Labour has dropped to 38 per cent from 47 per cent in early January.

The SNP has gained at Labour's expense, rising from 21 per cent in January to 28 per cent. The Liberal Democrats too have been squeezed,

down one point to 10 per cent. Last November they were at about 13 per cent.

Although nationalists claim that the independence bandwagon is unstoppable, support for independence, at 50 per cent according to a recent poll, still has to translate into votes for the party.

The results of the System Three poll for *The Herald* yesterday show that the Tories could win Edinburgh South, Edinburgh Central, Aberdeen South, and Strathkelvin and Bearsden and save two of their most vulnerable seats, Ayr and Stirling. However, the Galloway and Upper Nithsdale seat of Ian Lang, the Scottish secretary, is under threat from the SNP.

• The Liberal Democrats' spring conference will open with a rally in Glasgow next Friday night on the theme of moving "towards true democracy in Scotland". On Saturday the conference will have a full-scale debate on Scotland.

Philip Howard, page 12



Winning ways: Dr Julia Schofield and her guide dog, after Lord Reay, an industry minister, gave her London computer firm a £50,000 Small Firms Merit Award for Research and Technology

Kinnock derides tax cuts 'bribe'

BY SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

NEIL Kinnock rounded on the government last night for borrowing "to bribe" voters with money that they would later have to pay back, instead of building a path towards economic recovery.

In an attack on the government's economic record, the Labour leader said that the coming general election would be a contest between the Tories' negatives and Labour's positive policies.

The government had no excuses and no alibis for the state of the economy, only the guilt, Mr Kinnock told the Welsh Labour party conference in Swansea. He predicted that billions of pounds in extra borrowing to finance a possible 2p cut in income tax would be announced in the March 10 Budget to try to rescue the "expensive skins" of a few hundred Tory MPs.

"In desperation, they are putting the British people deeper into debt," Mr Kinnock said. "They are putting Britain in hock to try to keep themselves in office."

Extra borrowing to finance a "tax-cut bribe" would have to be paid back through higher VAT, with an extension of VAT to more goods and ser-

vices, and through health and education charges.

In one of his keynote speeches of the pre-election campaign, Mr Kinnock wondered why tax cuts had not been announced a year ago when Britain had gone into recession, if ministers were concerned about promoting recovery. "I'll tell you why they didn't do it," he said. "There wasn't an election 12 months ago. Indeed, they did the opposite. They put taxes up 12 months ago. They put 2½ percentage points on VAT for everybody."

Borrowing for electoral bait was plain wrong, Britain had become a country where a heart surgeon at Guy's Hospital could not treat a man who later died because a health authority had spent its budget for such surgery.

Mr Kinnock said that people had the choice of tax-cut bribes, paid for with borrowed money, or investment in production and public services. He said: "It's the difference between borrowing to bribe and borrowing to build. It's the difference between the Tories and Labour."

Labour promises care choice for elderly

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, SOCIAL SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

RESIDENTIAL homes run by local authorities would be expanded under a Labour government to give residents a "real choice" between public and private provision, the party says.

It would appoint a minister of community care to a re-named health department and would introduce an earmarked grant to local authorities to guarantee the level of provision. A benefit of £55 to £60 a week would be paid to full-time carers. But Labour's policy document, *Better Community Care*, launched yesterday, contains no funding commitment.

The party says that the present system unfairly favours the private sector, where residents can claim social security benefits. Labour would adjust the financial rules to "establish a level playing field" between the sectors. Robin Cook, shadow health secretary, said: "Our first priority is to halt the reduction in public provision."

Diary, page 12

It's one small book
but it speaks volumes
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Peers seek action on ship safety

BY SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

PEERS yesterday urged the government not to wait for another calamity on the scale of the Herald of Free Enterprise sinking or extinction of Britain's merchant fleet before setting up an independent shipping authority.

A House of Lords report called for the transport department to pass ship safety regulation to a new civil maritime authority modelled on the Civil Aviation Authority. The report echoes criticism by the National Audit Office that changes recommended after recent shipping disasters have not been made.

An enquiry by the Lords science committee found the world regime for ship safety to be fragmented. Each ship should have a "safety case", detailing risks and safety systems, to be approved by an independent regulator, it said.

New bulk carriers were impressive. More typical, the peers said, were substandard ships, corroded by cargoes and the sea, with small crews. They were "posing a threat not only to themselves and their crews, but to other ships, coastal populations and the marine environment".

An independent civil maritime body could forge a closer relationship with shipping, and be seen to put safety first.

House of Lords select committee on science and technology 2nd report: safety aspects of ship design and technology (Stationery Office, £16.60)

Fishing proposals attacked

BY MICHAEL HORNEBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

GOVERNMENT plans to conserve scarce fish stocks in the North Sea by paying fishermen to take their vessels out of service were described as "blackmail" in exchanges in the Commons yesterday.

John Gummer, the agriculture minister, said the £25 million de-commissioning scheme was needed to secure the long-term prosperity of the fishing industry. "We are asking today's fishermen to accept considerable burdens because of the overfishing of the past so as to provide for real fishing in the future."

The de-commissioning scheme would run for two years, starting in 1993, but the grants would only be available if skippers agreed to accept limits on the days the rest of their boats spend at sea. The aim would be to reduce fishing effort by about 10 per cent by 1996.

Alex Salmond, the Scottish National Party's leader and MP for the fishing constituency of Banff and Buchan, said Mr Gummer was using the de-commissioning grants to "blackmail the fishing community into accepting transferable catch quotas."

He claimed this would enable large operators to buy out small family businesses. "It would undermine the social fabric of entire fishing communities in Scotland and could lead to the loss of half the jobs in fishing," he said.

Major homes in on his big idea

BY JOHN SHAW

JOHN Major was surrounded by a media circus in his Huntingdon constituency yesterday as he launched a project dear to his heart: the first county council citizen's charter.

The prime minister acknowledged that the charter was his "big idea", but he said the Conservative-controlled Cambridgeshire county council began a thorough review of its operations three years ago, before he announced the national initiative. The intention was to ensure that people who use its services received the best possible deal.

A leaflet outlining its provisions is being delivered to every household in the county. It is being supported by nearly 30 pledges committing the authority to respond to enquiries

within five working days, repair dangerous potholes within 24 hours and provide free school meals to children whose parents are on income support within three days of receiving an application.

Mr Major praised the scheme as an example of local government at its best and brushed aside the scheme's critics.

"Those people who say it is a gimmick are those who are frightened of what we are actually seeing in central and local government, which is a revolution in the improvement of services and the personal nature of services. This is a continuing commitment to make sure we get the best possible services for the money available. It is already starting to work," Mr Major said.

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Russia orders enquiry into billion-rouble private deal

FROM MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW

A DOZEN members of the former Soviet Communist party elite, together with senior officials of the Russian government and defence establishment, are being investigated in connection with an unauthorised privatisation scheme that would have cost the Russian state an estimated one billion roubles (£330 million at the official commercial rate).

Officials in Moscow refused to give more details yesterday, saying that papers relating to the deal had been passed to the chief prosecutor

and the matter was now sub judice. The emerging scandal, known to involve the privatisation and development of the Vnukovo-3 airfield near Moscow, as well as satellite production and tracking systems, came to light piecemeal in the past 48 hours.

The size and nature of the deal, combined with the seniority of those implicated, holds the prospect of a final showdown between the old elite and the market-oriented Russian reformers, which could determine the fate of Russia's whole privatisation programme.

"The nomenklatura has not given up its fight yet," Valeri Makharadze, an aide to President Yeltsin, said. "Some of the toughest battles are still to come." Mr Makharadze holds the title "chief inspector at the president's office" and is responsible for monitoring implementation of Mr Yeltsin's instructions.

He predicted that the full parliamentary congress, scheduled for early April, would see a determined fightback by the old guard. Defence industry chiefs were, with Communist party officials, among the strongest supporters of the August coup. Among names mentioned in connection with what is known as the "Kolo" project are Leonid Kravchenko, the former head of Soviet state television and radio, and Aleksandra Biryukova, formerly responsible for social and consumer affairs.

Russian officials said they had heard no suggestion that Arkadi Volysky, the defence industry privatisation supervisor, was in any way involved. Mr Volysky heads the Russian enterprise association. The trail of the Kolo affair — Kolo appears to be an acronym relating either to the cosmos or conversion, but no one would, or could, explain it yesterday — was laid out Thursday when Russian officials disclosed that the government had summarily dismissed the deputy head of the state property committee, which is overseeing Russia's privatisation programme, and the deputy agriculture minister for "gross abuses of their position".

Last night Anatoli Chubais, the chairman of the committee for state property management, confirmed that former central committee members were implicated, but did not name them. Reports of dozens being involved were exaggerated, he said.

Kravchuk rallies to Yeltsin

Kiev: President Kravchuk told Ukrainians they must cooperate with Russia's leaders to defend democracy against a conservative backlash now threatening President Yeltsin's government.

"When there is frost on Thursday in Moscow it reaches Kiev by Friday," Mr Kravchuk told the Rukh movement, now filling the vacuum left by the banned communists as the country's main political force. (Reuters)

Mutiny ends

Niamey: Mutinous soldiers in Niger drew back from a coup, freeing arrested politicians and ending their occupation of the airport and radio station after the government agreed to pay their salaries. (Reuters)

Arms racket

Bordeaux: Thirty-one people, including an army major and former soldiers involved in a big racket smuggling arms for the French criminal underworld, received jail sentences of up to eight years at a court in Bordeaux. (Reuters)

Picassos found

Zurich: Police have recovered the Picasso-water colours, *Woman Sitting and Christ from Montmartre*, worth a total of £20 million stolen last June from an art gallery.

Bitter sweet

Rovigo, Italy: Police aiming to curb tax evasion in small shops, fined a two-year-old boy £3,000 (£13) after his mother bought him a chocolate and forgot to ask for a receipt. (Reuters)



Hot stuff: a Russian soldier wearing fire-proof combat clothing leaps over flames in a simulated napalm attack at the Militsopol strategic missile base, 550 miles east of Moscow. President Yeltsin wants to cut drastically Russian nuclear forces

Auction orbit for capsule

FROM PHILIP JACOBSON IN PARIS

FOR SALE: Soviet space capsule, one careful owner, slight traces of burn marks from atmospheric re-entry, no reasonable offer in hard currency refused.

If ever there was a symbol of the decline of what used to be the Soviet Union, it must be the presence in the catalogue of Parisian auctioneers Hervé Poulain of a "descent module of the Photon satellite," which translates into 2.3 tonnes of solid steel that was circulating in space for a little over two weeks in April last year.

According to M Poulain, bids for this unusual item — which even the experts of the *Antiques Roadshow* might find tricky to value precisely — can be expected to open at around one million francs (some £100,000) and could climb to about twice that amount.

If you must have the small print, the first of the Photon series of satellites was launched in the mid-1980s, its mission to acquire scientific data with microgravity experiments in outer space.

The one that has found its way into Poulain's showroom was in orbit for 16 days which, in terms of second-hand satellites, one gathers from the experts, represents a good few miles on the clock.

Commonwealth troops pulled out of Karabakh

Both sides have accused the armed forces of the fledgling commonwealth of siding with the other. Jonathan Lyons writes

TROOPS of the former Soviet Union were ordered to withdraw to safety from disputed Nagorno-Karabakh yesterday as fighting escalated between rival Azerbaijan and Armenia troops.

Ali Akbar Velayati, the Iranian foreign minister, who was forced by the heavy fighting to abandon a visit to the territory, met Armenian leaders and vowed his country would press on with attempts to mediate in the conflict. "Iran will continue its efforts as a go-between in the conflict," he said during a break in talks with Levon Ter-Petrosian, the Armenian president.

Armenia and Azerbaijan are involved in an undeclared war over Nagorno-Karabakh. The four-year conflict has killed more than 1,000 people and forced hundreds of thousands to flee. The enclave, administered since 1923 by Azerbaijan, is largely populated by Armenians. Past mediation attempts have gone down in a hail of bullets and broken promises.

Yevgeni Shaposhnikov, commander-in-chief of the Commonwealth of Independent States forces, issued the withdrawal order as CIS troops came under fire at their base in the regional capital, Stepanakert, during a fresh flare-up of fighting.

"The decision has been taken to withdraw the 366th regiment beyond the boundaries of Nagorno-Karabakh... and to strengthen guards on all depots and bases where military equipment is stored," a commonwealth defence ministry spokesman said.

According to Interfax news agency, the commonwealth troops had been ordered to withdraw not only from Nagorno-Karabakh but also from along the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Both sides have accused the armed forces of the fledgling commonwealth of siding with the other in the conflict.

Marshal Shaposhnikov

Albanian police foil refugees

FROM REUTERS IN TIRANA

POLICE sealed Albania's main port, Durres, and ordered ships to leave yesterday after thousands of would-be refugees flooded there in the hope of fleeing a country racked by poverty, looting and violence.

Police with megaphones patrolled the streets of the Adriatic port, telling people that they had been misled by false rumours. Earlier, security forces had fired warning shots into the air. Television showed pictures of an empty harbour to discourage others from heading for the port. Crowds were reported at the smaller port of Shengjin, 50 miles north of Tirana, the capital.

The would-be refugees, hoping to follow Albanians who fled in commandeered ships last year, arrived as looting and violence raged for the fourth successive day. At least three people have been killed in the latest wave of rioting as the former Stalinist state lurches towards elections in three weeks' time.

PEOPLE

Appeal nets beer money

A CONSERVATIVE military newspaper in St Petersburg has launched an ironic appeal to help the former Soviet president, Mikhail Gorbachev, through the hard times he says he is enduring. But one day's collection by *Ná Strazhe Rodiny* (On Guard for the Homeland) netted Mr Gorbachev only enough to buy a small slice of cheese or three bottles of Russian beer.

Chicago city council has unanimously approved a resolution to ask the American postal service to issue a stamp for the late Richard Daley, who was the city's mayor for 21 years. The move was inspired by a planned stamp honouring Elvis Presley.

George Peppard, aged 63, has been told that a small tumour on his right lung is not cancerous, but the medical scare has motivated him to give up smoking.

Dutch royal guards, military police and firemen combed the Huis ten Bosch palace grounds with an animal ambulance in readiness, but they found Queen Beatrix's pet two-year-old border terrier, Miss Pepper, had died after chasing a rabbit down a hole.

President Elias Hrawi of Lebanon was reported in good health after a "simple" surgical operation in an east Beirut hospital. Presidential aides refused to disclose the type of surgery that he underwent.

The Swedish Academy, which awards the Nobel literature prize, named Katarina Frostenson, a 38-year-old poet, as a lifetime member, bringing to three the number of women among the 18 members of the academy.

Sarah Brightman is to take a break from her £7,000-a-week starring role in the musical *Aspects of Love*, from next month until May while she tours Japan with *The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber*. Her role will be taken by Susannah Fellows.

Belgrade purges military

FROM DESSA TREVISAN IN BELGRADE AND JOHN HOLLAND IN SARAJEVO

MORE than 20 generals and admirals including General Veljko Kadijevic, the former federal defence minister, and his deputy, Admiral Stane Brovet, have been retired in a purge designed to eliminate non-Serbs from the Yugoslav military leadership.

General Kadijevic had resigned his ministerial post immediately after the shooting down of an EC helicopter last month. All Macedonian generals have been retired early following Macedonia's declaration of independence.

But several Serb generals have also been removed. All of them had served in Slovenia and in Croatia for many years and have been blamed for the loss of those republics.

In Sarajevo yesterday on the eve of a referendum in the ethnically-mixed republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, its Muslim president said that the West supported its move towards independence, and that neither Croats nor Serbs could stop this. Alija Izetbegovic said that Bosnia, much of which is under blockade, has "Europe, the US, and the Muslim world behind us. They [Croatia and Serbia] can do nothing."

He was referring to recent expressions of support from the EC as well as financial assistance from Turkey. The weekend-long referendum has been overshadowed by several random bombings in parts of northern Bosnia, where Serbian nationalism is particularly strong.

Omer Behmen, Mr Izetbegovic's deputy in the Democratic Party of Action, yesterday announced plans for setting up local Muslim civilian militia units in troubled areas.

"If civil war breaks out," he said, "we are ready to defend ourselves." Adding to the general nervousness in Sarajevo were louder than usual rumours that Croatia and Serbia were close to an agreement to carve up Bosnia-Herzegovina.

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St Michael

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Allies urge Canada to leave troops in Europe

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE British government has made a formal request to Canada to reverse the decision to withdraw its 7,000 troops from Germany. Nato defence ministers are also expected to put pressure on Ottawa to change its mind.

The announcement earlier this week that the troops are to return home to save money has caused such opposition within the alliance that every diplomatic means is to be used to keep at least some Canadian troops in Ger-

many. Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, instructed Britain's High Commissioner in Canada to deliver the government's formal appeal for a change of heart. The Canadian High Commissioner in London was also summoned to the Foreign Office to hear the British objections.

Barbara McDougall, Canada's external affairs minister, had telephoned Mr Hurd to warn him of her government's decision before the announcement was made on Wednesday. On the phone, Mr Hurd made it clear that Britain would prefer Canada to stick to its original plan, which was to leave 1,100 troops in Germany.

The Canadian foreign minister is reported to have replied that it was "unlikely" that Ottawa would comply with the British request. As part of the alliance's pressure on Canada, Nato's special consultancy procedure is to be invoked within the next few weeks.

Manfred Wörner, Nato's secretary-general, is expected to call for a meeting of the defence review committee, consisting of military delegates from each alliance member. A report will then be made to the next defence planning committee, at which the alliance defence ministers are expected to seek a reversal of the Canadian plan.

Ottawa had announced last September that its two bases in southern Germany — at Laehr and Baden-Sülfingen — would be closed, but a task force of 1,100 troops was to stay in Europe. However, Don Mazankowski, the Canadian finance minister, said in his budget presentation this week that the closure of the bases, which was originally scheduled before the end of 1995, would be speeded up, and that Canada had decided against maintaining even the task force.



Barbara McDougall: warned Britain

Mr Keating said in a radio interview that he was not concerned about people getting upset. "I'll always give you a pro-Australian view, and we are not going to be doffing our lid or tugging our forelock to anybody," he said.

Alf Garland, president of the Returned Services League, said Mr Keating did not understand what was going on. "He's too young to remember what it was like in 1941-42, he did not understand what the state of the world was at that stage of the game," he said. "He's obviously a man that wants to do away with any connection with the United Kingdom... he just flipped his lid."

In Wellington, Jim Bolger, the New Zealand prime minister, distanced himself from Mr Keating's remarks, assuring the visiting Duke of Edinburgh that New Zealand retained strong ties with Britain. (Reuters)

Medals flaunted as rivals invade Georgia

FROM PETER STOTHARD
US EDITOR
IN SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

A SHINING marble map of Vietnam sits by the riverside road which the candidates must tread towards Tuesday's election. George Bush will be here tomorrow. Dan Quayle came on Tuesday. Bill Clinton passed by last week, and Patrick Buchanan is also expected in Savannah before votes are cast in this next big test of the 1992 campaign.

Even in this rare American city of London-like squares, Victorian statuary, plinths and obelisks celebrating 18th-century preachers and adventurers, this memorial is remarkable. It displays, instead of the common abstract design, the very places where Americans died. It is more homely than formal; the surround is of bricks bearing sponsors' messages from "Ben and the kids", a "miss you" to Peg.

The map is also barely two years old. For President Bush, war hero and commander-in-chief, this symbol of raw Southern patriotism is an encouraging sign as he stumps against a bitter Buchanan campaign whose latest television attack shows him corrupting children with subsidised pornography. For Mr Clinton, still considered the Democratic front-runner, Savannah's new monument is an obstacle that could yet bury his chances.

At the end of a week where the two parties have vied with each other in internecine viciousness, Mr Clinton is struggling. He needs decisively to rebut the charge that his avoidance of the Vietnam draft makes him unelectable to the White House.

Barbara Palmer is a Republican who owns an antique shop by the memorial



Under pressure: Bill Clinton, seen here with his family, showed campaign pressure is getting to him when he risked black votes by accusing Jesse Jackson of double-crossing and backstabbing

entrance. She is lukewarm about Mr Bush, whom "I might find time to see on Sunday", and fascinated by Mr Buchanan, whom she thinks will none the less be soundly beaten here. What she loves most is to see Democrats scrapping to death.

Governor Clinton's rival, Senator Bob Kerrey, began the show on Wednesday. Arriving from his home-turf victory in South Dakota, he said that his opponent would

be cut up by Republicans in November like "a soft peanut" because of his Vietnam war evasions.

Senator Kerrey, who had been saying that he would not exploit his own Vietnam Medal of Honour, came here with enough benedictioned heroes for a Buckingham Palace garden party. "A politician is never happier than when he is calling his rival a coward," one of Ms Palmer's customers says. Mr Clinton

then began to look for targets of his own. "I am tired of what is cold-bloodedness being passed off as courage," he said of Paul Tsongas, hoping to wrest back the bravery awards from those who believe that they can only be won on battlefields.

He later turned in frustration on a rival who is not even running. He was overheard accusing Jesse Jackson of "dirty double-crossing backstabbing" for his report-

ed endorsement of Tom Harkin.

Outside, by the memorial itself, Tad Hartman from south Georgia is showing some friends around the sites. They are Methodists who have just visited the spot where John Wesley, one of the founding fathers of Savannah, delivered his first sermon on American soil. Mr Hartman is sympathetic to Governor Clinton's troubles. He accuses Senator

Kerrey of insulting Southerners by "playing Rambo here and sensitive professor up in New Hampshire". One of his friends is less impressed. Staring at the bronze boots which sit on the marble map around the site of Hanoi, he says that "fighting in a war is one of the few things, like being president, that one does for the whole country. I don't think Clinton is qualified". It does not take many conversations with voters here to discover that blunt instruments are not used only at the top.

Most people have some idea that an election is being fought. Many have gathered too that Georgia, the gateway to the mass of Southern primaries on March 10, is unusually important this year. But one woman I spoke to was certain that Mr Buchanan was a Democrat.

Why else would he be identifying a Republican president with leather-clad male dancers, perversion of Christianity, and other crimes perpetrated by the American equivalent of the Arts Council? Many had never even heard of Senator Kerrey. For the people of this southeast Atlantic coast, his Nebraska home might as well be Poland.

Tuesday's result is likely to be as complex as the campaign is vicious. President Bush is set to win — but how bloody will Mr Buchanan make his nose? Bill Clinton is also a likely victor — but will Senator Kerrey be able to pile a destructive number of "raw patriot" votes on top of his new tactical "Clinton can't win in November" votes? John Wesley, who in 1737 saw "a general face of decency and order" here "beyond what I have seen elsewhere in America" would not have been amused.

Tsongas picture, page 16

Liberals hijack Mardi Gras parade

Charles Bremner finds that a woman has put a stop to the more outrageous antics of the Easter Parades, turning New Orleans into a far more sober city

GIVEN the censorious mood of America, it was surprising that the citizens of New Orleans had got away for so long with their carnival, that week of pre-Lenten debauchery which culminates with the grand parades of Mardi Gras. To the relief of the politically correct and the fury of many revellers, things are different this year.

A new city by-law enforcing racial and sexual conformity has hit the traditional parade clubs, known as "krewes", like a cold shower, driving two of them to cancel their festivities and putting a damper on the fun of the rest. The ordinance, passed by the seven-member city government on the urging of Councilor Dorothy Mae Taylor, demands racially and sexually diverse membership among the secretive krewes. These are dominated by

heterosexual white men but also number female, black and gay contingents.

The city's falling apart and they go after one of the few things that are still really working," complained Henri Schindler, an aggrieved float designer, in the run-up to Louisiana's annual outburst of hedonism. Delores Kepner, captain of the Krewe of Cleopatra, an all-woman's club, said she was disgusted by the council move. "What they're doing is causing a lot of racial dissent. There's no reason any man I know would want to belong to an organisation named Cleopatra."

But they will not see the men of Comus and the Knights of Momus, prestigious krewes which are boycotting the events. The two

had from the earliest days of the carnival tradition, which was founded by the city's French and English-speaking aristocracy in the mid-19th century. Most of the others decided to turn up after the council rescinded the five-month jail terms it had reserved as punishment for breaking its law, which takes full effect in 1993.

Ms Taylor, who is now being cast on T-shirts as "the witch who stole Mardi Gras", and her supporters insist that the krewes are elitist, white, neo-clubs that perpetuate the racism of the Ku Klux Klan and the politics of David Duke, the right-wing Louisiana politician.

"The Mardi Gras issue is only a smokescreen," she said. "There are no crowds of blacks waiting to jump on floats, but they are waiting for a cut of the economic pie."

Drug summit seeks help from Japan

FROM RITA BEAMISH IN SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

PRESIDENT Bush and six Latin American leaders concluded a drug summit with renewed pledges to combat narcotics, but there were no new financial promises from Mr Bush to help his neighbours fight the battle.

Instead, the seven leaders called on European and Asian countries, singling out Japan in particular, to share in both the financial burden of the war on drugs and to join in co-operative interdiction efforts. The summit nations will send a delegation, with one member from each country, to visit Europe and Japan and seek bilateral and multilateral agreements on aid and cooperation.

In a Declaration of San

Antonio, the participants agreed to a series of steps that for the most part expand existing efforts to combat coca production and money laundering, increase training of law enforcement agents and improve the sharing of intelligence. They also agreed to hold annual high-level follow-up meetings.

Mr Bush called drug trafficking "a new kind of transnational enemy". He added: "Make no mistake. Defeat the traffickers, we will."

Mr Bush said afterwards there had been significant progress during the past two years. He said drug use among young people in the United States was down by 60 per cent. (AP)

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De Klerk will campaign in apartheid's heartland

FROM GAVIN BELL IN JOHANNESBURG

PRESIDENT de Klerk has scheduled 56 public appearances in ten days to appeal for a clear mandate to pursue the goal of a multiracial democracy.

It is a political campaign more intense than that of the last general election in 1989. If any whites in South Africa are not aware of the issues at stake when they vote in a referendum on constitutional reforms next month, it will not be his fault.

Proofs of whiteness demanded

FROM RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

VOTERS in South Africa's referendum on constitutional change next month must prove they are white, if electoral officers have any doubts about their colour.

Identity documents issued to all South African citizens no longer specify the race classification of the holder and there has been speculation during the last few days that people who do not look exactly white could sneak into polling booths and record a vote in the all-white referendum called by President de Klerk for March 17.

But all home affairs regional officers are computer-linked with the population register which apparently still colour-codes everybody despite the repeal last year of the Population Registration Act.

tory workers, policemen and firemen, teachers and students will be subjected to speeches exhorting them to reject the Conservative party's demands for a return to apartheid. Pensioners in old-age homes and mine workers will be urged to rally to the cause. The Portuguese and Greek communities will be addressed, along with golfers at the 19th green of their club in Pietermaritzburg.

Mr de Klerk's referendum road show will venture where few National party politicians have willingly gone before, into the Conservative strongholds of Orange Free State and northern Transvaal. Senior cabinet ministers have been mobilised to the offensive, with R.F. "Pik" Botha, the popular foreign minister, leading a bold assault on the right-wing territory.

As the National party troops prepare for action, they have been encouraged by an opinion poll which suggests they will rout the opposition. According to the survey published in a Johannesburg newspaper, President de Klerk could win with 55 per cent of the electorate to 16 per cent against. However, 25 per cent of the 2,400 people polled by telephone refused to disclose their preference, indicating the projection could be wildly inaccurate.

The Conservatives believe most Afrikaners have decided where their loyalties lie, and are focusing their campaign on the more fluid English-speaking vote in the cities and Natal.

Geneva: The United Nations highest human rights body voted yesterday to continue sanctions against South Africa, despite the opposition of Western nations and members of the former East bloc.



Birthday bravura: Elizabeth Taylor arriving for her 60th birthday party at Disneyland in Anaheim, California. The 1,000 guests were given a programme that read: "Welcome to the Happiest Birthday on Earth. Here,

no one is Grumpy, and everyone is Happy." Partygoers were carried by vintage cars decorated with orchids, and violet and yellow balloons adorned Sleeping Beauty Castle, filled with folk dancers and jugglers.

UN force gets the go ahead

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

THE United Nations Security Council yesterday launched the largest UN peacekeeping operation, sending 22,000 personnel to organise elections in Cambodia by May 1993. The 15-nation council voted unanimously to approve the creation of the UN transitional authority in Cambodia (Untac) despite concern about its estimated \$1.9 billion (£1.1 billion) cost.

Under the terms of the peace accord on Cambodia, reached in Paris last October, Untac will virtually take over running of the country after 13 years of civil war between the Vietnamese-backed government and the three-party guerrilla coalition. United Nations personnel will disarm government and rebel troops, oversee key ministries, monitor human rights and organise elections.

A 15,900-strong peacekeeping force equipped with 26 helicopters, 10 planes and 30 boats is to be deployed in the country by the end of May. By September, the force is to move 450,000 government troops and guerrillas into special areas. More than 2,400 UN officials will fan out across the country to register voters.

Somalia battles greet mediators

FROM DAVID CHAZAN IN MOGADISHU

FIGHTING raged in Mogadishu yesterday, the day before United Nations mediators were due to arrive in a renewed effort to arrange a ceasefire. Sporadic shelling and gunfire continued, while 4.5 million Somalis are threatened by famine, according to the International Committee of the Red Cross.

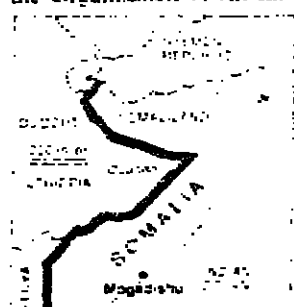
At least 20,000 people, mostly civilians, have been killed or wounded in four months of fighting between the interim president, Ali Mahdi Muhammad, and General Muhammad Farrah Aidid.

General Aidid's forces loosely control about three-quarters of Mogadishu. Neither side seems able to win a decisive victory and civilians are still being killed by indiscriminate artillery barrages and small-arms battles in the once beautiful city of Arab and Italian colonial villas on the Indian Ocean coast.

Lawlessness is rife throughout Somalia's arid scrublands. The east African country has disintegrated into warring feudal fiefdoms since its former ruler, Muhammad Siad Barre, was ousted in January last year.

Mr Siad Barre still has thousands of well-armed fighters, several hundred of whom are reportedly less than 125 miles west of Mogadishu. His son-in-law, Muhammad Said Morgan, took control of the southern port of Kismayo this month, raising fears that Siad Barre loyalists could launch a two-pronged offensive on the capital.

A 24-member team of mediators from the United Nations, the Islamic Conference, the Organisation of African



Unity and the Arab League were due to fly into Mogadishu today. But observers expect the same kind of upsurge in fighting which has accompanied previous missions.

Earlier this month representatives of the two factions agreed in New York to an immediate truce and promised to sign a formal ceasefire before the end of this month, but the fighting has intensified (AFP)

Homesteads fear Harare land bill

A bill tabled this week, which provides for compulsory acquisition of farms, threatens to deprive whites of their livelihoods, Jan Raath reports

FROM the front porch of Ian King's hilltop homestead, you can see the "designated" land where the government wants to resettle peasant farmers. It stretches to the north as far as the smooth granite hills beyond the Marodzi river.

The landscape on both sides of the river is a pleasing carpet of green crops, occasionally broken by wooded kopjes. But on one side of the river, the farmer-owners have no right to sell their property or remove assets because the government has set the "designated" land aside for compulsory purchase to resettle the peasant under the terms of the land acquisition bill tabled in parliament on Thursday.

The area about 50 miles north of Harare is one of

areas of "designated land" is part of about two million acres planned as the first phase of about 13.5 million acres to be seized for the "revolutionary land reform" that President Mugabe has authorised.

Mr King's roots to the land go back to the grand-mother who arrived a century ago as an infant in the back of an ox-wagon. His father bought the 700 acres of virgin bush in 1951. Now it is split up into 208 acres of maize, 98 acres of soya beans, 183 acres of winter wheat, pasture for 100 dairy cows and a small area for irrigated french beans and field flowers which are exported to Europe, as well as buildings for the 400 workers.

"We are getting closer to the reality of it," he said, glancing towards where 9,000 farmers and workers have been thrown into dependency by the government's designation act. "I keep saying, well, I don't think it's really going to happen. It's so much more than a businessman having a factory nationalised. It's losing your home, your livelihood, your life." But the fear really lies in President Mugabe's determination to avoid paying market prices for land and replacement values for assets. That would deprive farmers of any chance of starting anew elsewhere.

"I believe the government has other motives in this land issue," Mr King said. "It goes back to the war. The stubbornness of white farmers who sat it out and wouldn't budge still irritates people in government."

Even if parliament passes the bill, its implementation is likely to be threatened by a barrage of condemnation at home and abroad. Mr King also points to the government's poor record in putting "radical" policies into action. However, he continues to draw hope from Mr Mugabe's surprisingly candid assurance to whites soon after coming to power in 1980: "Judge us by what we do, and not by what we say."



Mugabe: pursuing his revolutionary zeal

the most productive farming belts in Zimbabwe. The only exception to the sense of abundance is a farm owned by Joseph M'sika, the chairman of the ruling Zanu party, that has fallen into dereliction, despite generous loans from the government.

"The owners of the 30-odd 'designated' farms on the other side of the Marodzi will have no right to expect fair compensation for the seizure of their land, which can be paid off by the new owners gradually with government bonds. Farmers will not be permitted to contest unfair compensation payments."

"I've missed designation so far, but it could easily be me next year," Mr King, aged 44, said. The 36,750

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UN keeps open all options as Iraq stalls on missiles

FROM PETER JAMES SPIELMANN IN NEW YORK

THE UN Security Council yesterday called on Iraq to comply with plans to begin the destruction of its ballistic missile plants, but did not spell out possible consequences of Iraqi defiance.

Thomas Pickering, the council president and American ambassador to the UN, disclosed that Iraq had sought a 24-hour delay in the destruction operation, but did not use the word "deadline". He said that the security council was likely to hold closed consultations yesterday once the 24-hour postponement period had lapsed.

Rolf Ekeus, the chairman of the UN commission charged with eliminating Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, said that if Iraq had not allowed the destruction operation to begin yesterday, the team would be withdrawn. The council has demanded that Iraq comply fully with weapons inspection and destruction and warned

of unspecified "serious consequences" for failure to do so.

Iraq "clearly is moving in a mode to challenge the security council resolutions," Mr Pickering, this month's president of the 15-nation council, said. Asked whether the council would consider military action against Iraq, Mr Pickering said that "no option is foreclosed, and no option is decided on".

He said that he had already "expressed the council's deep concern and consternation" to Samir al-Nima, the second-most senior official at Iraq's UN mission. "The Iraqis are stalling on a commitment to destroy certain ballistic missiles," he added. Iraq has balked at the UN resolutions, accusing America of using the world body to destroy Iraq's modern industries, many of which have dual civilian-military uses.

Officials said they had received no communication from Baghdad by yesterday

morning on whether destruction of the weapons had begun. The council filed a protest on Thursday after the chief UN weapons inspector reported that Iraq had refused to comply with resolutions demanding the destruction of its weapons of mass destruction.

A year after the Gulf war ended last February 28, Saudi Arabia's wartime commander said in an interview that the kingdom had planned to hit Iraq with its own long-range missiles during the war but that King Fahd had stopped the attack.

"I remember once that I issued orders to prepare the missiles," Prince Khaled bin Sultan, who commanded the Arab forces within the US-dominated coalition, told the United Arab Emirates newspaper, *al-Itihad*. "We only needed the order to launch them," he said. (AP)

Leading article, page 13



Campus masquerade: masked Palestinian women, affiliated to the communist party, march through the campus of Bethlehem University in the West Bank wielding axes and shouting anti-

Israeli slogans. The demonstration yesterday came as the fourth round of the Middle East peace talks got underway in Washington. Israel, yesterday, expressed regret over the death of a Lebanese soldier, shot by an army patrol in its self-declared security zone in southern Lebanon (Richard Birston writes). The soldier was suspected of being a guerrilla. The incident was the first key

test of the uneasy ceasefire in the area after last week's clashes between Israeli troops and Lebanese guerrillas belonging to Hezbollah, the fundamentalist Shia Muslim organisation.

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'Messiah' arouses rival rabbi's wrath

FROM RICHARD BIRSTON IN JERUSALEM

EVEN jaded Israeli voters, accustomed to the vagaries of their political system, were surprised this week by two nonagenarian rabbis, whose ultra-orthodox parties could hold the balance of power after this summer's elections, engaged in an unseemly verbal exchange over allegations that one believes he is a "Messiah".

While other Israeli leaders began the usual bout of pre-election attacks on their rivals, few accusations matched that of Rabbi Eliezer Schach, aged 95, the spiritual leader of two key political parties in the Knesset, who said that his long-time adversary, Rabbi Menachem Schneerson, aged 90, the spiritual head of a third party, should be excommunicated for presenting himself as a "false Messiah".

Ultra-orthodox voters account for 10 per cent of the electorate and in the last elections won 13 seats in the Knesset, enough to make or break any coalition government and to secure a privileged position in politics.

However, plans to maintain their alliance for the next general election on June 23 have been set back by Rabbi Schach's outburst against Rabbi Schneerson, the leader of the powerful Lubavitcher movement based in Brooklyn, which has recently stepped up its campaign telling its followers to "prepare for the coming of the Messiah" and the redemption of world Jewry. The Messianic advertising campaign could be dismissed as over-enthusiasm, were it not for the fact that many of Rabbi Schneerson's adoring followers publicly proclaim him to be the Messiah, a conviction he has never attempted to contradict.

His supporters argue that he is of the correct lineage to be the Messiah, he has the right religious credentials, and like the Messiah he has never visited the Jewish state. Suspicions that he is planning to visit Israel and "reveal" himself were increased last week when it was announced that work had begun on the construction of his house in the Lubavitcher community of Kfar Chabad, outside Tel Aviv.

"The rabbi has repeatedly said that, when he comes to Israel, it will be together with the Messiah," said a spokesman for the community.

Rabbi Schach, the most influential rabbi in Israel, did not wait long to dismiss the obvious innuendo and retorted on Wednesday: "The Jewish people have experienced enough false Messiahs and this could lead to apostasy. A real Messiah does not need advertisements or petitions."

"If I had the power, I would have him excommunicated." Fearing that the rabbinical feud could get out of hand, Ayele Dori, the Israeli interior minister, urged both sides to leave the Messiah out of Israeli politics.



Schneerson: has never visited the Jewish state

Scientists tackle riddle of Sphinx

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN CAIRO

THE first international conference devoted to the great archaeological riddle of how to preserve the 4,600-year-old Sphinx opens today in the shadow of the pyramids at Giza, themselves also threatened with alarming decay.

Scientists from America, France, Italy, Germany, Sweden, Austria, Switzerland and Canada will attend the four-day gathering which is designed to evaluate two years of plastic surgery on the Sphinx's limestone body and paws and to recommend further treatment.

For much of its life, the half-man, half-lion was buried up to its neck in sand and thus protected from the rigours of the outside world. Since being uncovered, it has fallen prey to wind, water and a number of botched attempts to save it.

Probably one of the most damaging efforts to restore the figure carved from 50 million-year-old rock occurred 20 years ago, when hopeful scientists injected a chemical into its chest to harden the stone. The treatment flaked, taking with it

some of the invaluable mother rock it was designed to save.

Omar Arini, an archaeological chemist, said: "It is not just an old building that you are going to refurbish and renovate. Basically, you are dealing with a lousy rock that has been a lousy rock forever."

"How can I judge?" asks Zahi Hawass, director of the Giza plateau area. "Everyone keeps coming up with proposals. I am in a critical position because I cannot test things out on the Sphinx. I must have accurate data before I work on it."

Mr Hawass, the man who called the the conference, added: "The world has to participate in the restoration of the Sphinx. Everything to do with it and its surroundings will be discussed. For the first time, we have clear data on it, collected over the past two years."

● Delhi: The Indian government is to ban new industries round the 400-year-old Taj Mahal, whose white dome is yellowing because of industrial pollution.

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Clifford Longley

Whatever happened to the church v state battle?

A recording angel contemplating the present state of civilisation might conclude that the spontaneous combustion of communism last year is about to be followed by the self-destruction of capitalism now. The flow of bad news about recession, unemployment, bankruptcy and fraud in the so-called free-market economies of the West awaits in vain some countering flood of good news.

But said angel, whose duties are bound to include standing his reports according to the priorities of his readership, will be looking in vain for anything much in the way of a religious angle. During the high days of radical new-right Toryism, his readers would have been regaled with stirring news of the conflict between that new secular faith and the faith which was old (and by law established). The Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of Durham were among the warlords of that ideological decade, and *Faith in the City* was one of their famous battlefields.

So the possible imminent demise of their opponents must surely hand these prize bishops the final victory. But it is not likely to be so, the angel will have to record. For some reason not immediately apparent, the present plight of the economy and the government seems to have nothing to do with those trenchant exchanges of the 1980s between church and state. Thatcher v Runcie, or whatever label best served. Those debates seem now distant and irrelevant.

In the course of the encounter, all sides realised that the Church of England had become too ideologically attached to the consensus politics and economics of 1940-79. On the government's side there came also the growing realisation that things the church thought self-evidently right and the government thought self-evidently wrong were also regarded as right by a majority of voters. There was, after all, such a thing as society; no individual was merely a lonely atom of economic activity. Value could be found in the collective conciliatory spirit; endless confrontation turned the voters off, and, ultimately, Mrs Thatcher out.

The Church of England played a modest part in that outcome, not by anything it said or did at the end, but by continuing to uphold throughout the decade, however hazy, certain soft (known to Thatcherism as "wet") collective attitudes. There never was a cultural revolution in favour of individual enterprise in wealth creation, much though the government wanted to believe in it, and indeed, cleared the decks for it.

This is where the critique of government economic policy and ideology by the church should have drilled deeply but hardly scratched the surface. The church spent the 1980s avoiding coming to terms with the necessity of wealth creation, preoccupied as it was with the subordinate issue of wealth distribution. Having never explored what wealth creation meant, however, the church was never able to spot the difference between wealth creation and wealth manipulation (the zero-sum no-value-added process of buying, borrowing, lending and selling), which is where fortunes in the 1980s were characteristically made (and, in the end, lost).

Although it had the theoretical base to do so, Thatcherism never succeeded in establishing a moral distinction between various forms of wealth, nor in giving primacy to wealth which is freshly created, industrial wealth. The industrialist is wealthier than the financier; indeed the financier's only worth is the service he can give to the industrialist. Both Thatcherism and Christianity ought to have learnt to say as much, at least by the end of the 1980s. But neither did so, Thatcherism because it persisted in the belief that all wealth was equally good (even wealth merely creamed off from somebody else's creative effort), Christianity because it could not shake the prejudice that all wealth was equally bad, the possession of riches being threatening (it was assumed) to personal salvation.

A bit of Old Testament teaching on wealth, and the goodness of its creation as a continuation by man of God's creation of the universe, might have brought church and government into real dialogue in time to address the economic processes which started to go wrong in the late 1980s. Ironically, Mrs Thatcher was surrounded by economist advisers who were said also to be Biblical and Evangelical Christians. It will be the recording angel's business to ask in which capacity they failed her more. By telling that her economics is a blind, autonomous, amoral activity, he will have to answer that they failed her as Christians.

Once every four years or so, with the regularity of the Disabled Olympics, the editors of newspapers press me for anecdotes about what it is like to live with abnormality. Of course, I have never known anything else. I was born two weeks prematurely, with a sprinkling of hair upon my shoulders and ears; but there were no obvious signs that, by some teratological mischance—at odds of approximately 1,460 to 1—my mother had given birth to a bissextile daughter.

As a minority, we have not received much official attention, but in 1974, after questions by the Labour MP for Dudley East, the Home Office spent four days deliberating our legal status. On February 15, it was decided that I and up to 2,500 fellow-sufferers would not be allowed to vote in the forthcoming election on February 28.

This, I fear, is the extent of my persecution by the authorities; otherwise, being a leap-year baby was nothing but a boon. As a child, when birthdays were at the passionately anticipated crown of the year, a leap birthday was a glory, jest and riddle, properly appreciated by my contemporaries. And no godparent ever forgot it.

Julius Caesar is responsible

Caroline Moore, aged nine, ponders the mythology and magic surrounding February 29

Confessions of a bissextile



Watch out chaps: a rare leap-year card from 1908

became fractionally earlier each year. By 1582, the accumulated difference made up ten days, and Pope Gregory XIII undertook further adjustments. He dropped the surplus ten days from 1582, and decreed that in future three intercalary days must be dropped every four hundred years. Now, therefore, every centenary year has a leap day only if it is divisible by 400 rather than the usual four; thus 1900 was not a leap year, but 2000 will be.

Britain, of course, showed a sturdy resistance to all things foreign, and particularly all things popish, and refused to subscribe to the Gregorian cal-

endar for nearly two hundred years. By that time, the gap had widened still further, and in 1751, Chesterfield's Act had to order that 11 days be dropped from September 1752. Riots ensued, whipped by the soul-stirring cry of "Give us back our eleven days!"

Even this arrangement is not perfect. Another adjustment is due in 5100 apparently, when an extra leap-day will be needed. Nowadays, however, the thought of an extra birthday is mysteriously less potent than of old, although my birthday parties do of course offer an opportunity for that good old custom of female proposals. In Scotland, this used to be a tradition with teeth, enforced by a law of 1288, which stated that

during the reign of his majesty Magistrate, for like years known as leap years, all maiden ladies... shall have liberty to bespeak ye man she like, albeit he refuses to take her to be his lawful wife, he shall be mulcted in the sum of one pundis...

In England, the bashful or horrified swain escaped the rig-

ours of the law, but by tradition had to give a silk gown as the price of refusal. In the early stages, presumably, one pound might have covered the cost of the 13th-century equivalent of a Bellville Sassoon creation.

Sadly, my birth brings no special privileges here, such as a plenary year of proposals. In fact, my husband's birthday offers far greater practical advantages: he was born on Halloween, which bestows special powers of commination. Cosmo Lang, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1928 to 1942, used his Halloween powers to remove architectural eyesores. He cursed a hideous red terracotta hydropathic hotel which was ruining a favourite loch; it burnt down, was rebuilt in yellow, re-cursed, and burnt down again. He was then asked to curse an East window by an incumbent suffering from its "unexampled ugliness": the window duly imploded the following Sunday.

Meanwhile, for year-round subversion of gender, I have to fall back on my status as the mother of twins (born on April Fool's Day). In Angola, this would enable me to speak in councils, swear, and insult men with impunity. Who could ask for more?

Venice behind closed doors

John Julius Norwich wonders if a decision to close most of the city's churches to protect their art treasures will be enforced

Lovers of Venice read with dismay this week that because of a wave of art thefts and a cutback in financing to pay watchmen, most of the city's churches will be locked up from April and opened only once a day for Mass.

But then some of us thought a bit. What was this "wave of art thefts"? In the quarter of a century I have been involved with Venice, I can remember only one successful theft of a major work of art from a Venetian church: the Giovanni Bellini triptych from SS Giovanni e Paolo, which was recovered undamaged soon afterwards.

An attempt on another Bellini, in the Madonna dell'Orto, failed when the thieves found themselves unable to wrench it from its frame. It was found the next morning split down the middle but still mercifully *in situ*. Both these incidents occurred, as far as I remember, at least 15 years ago: since then, nothing.

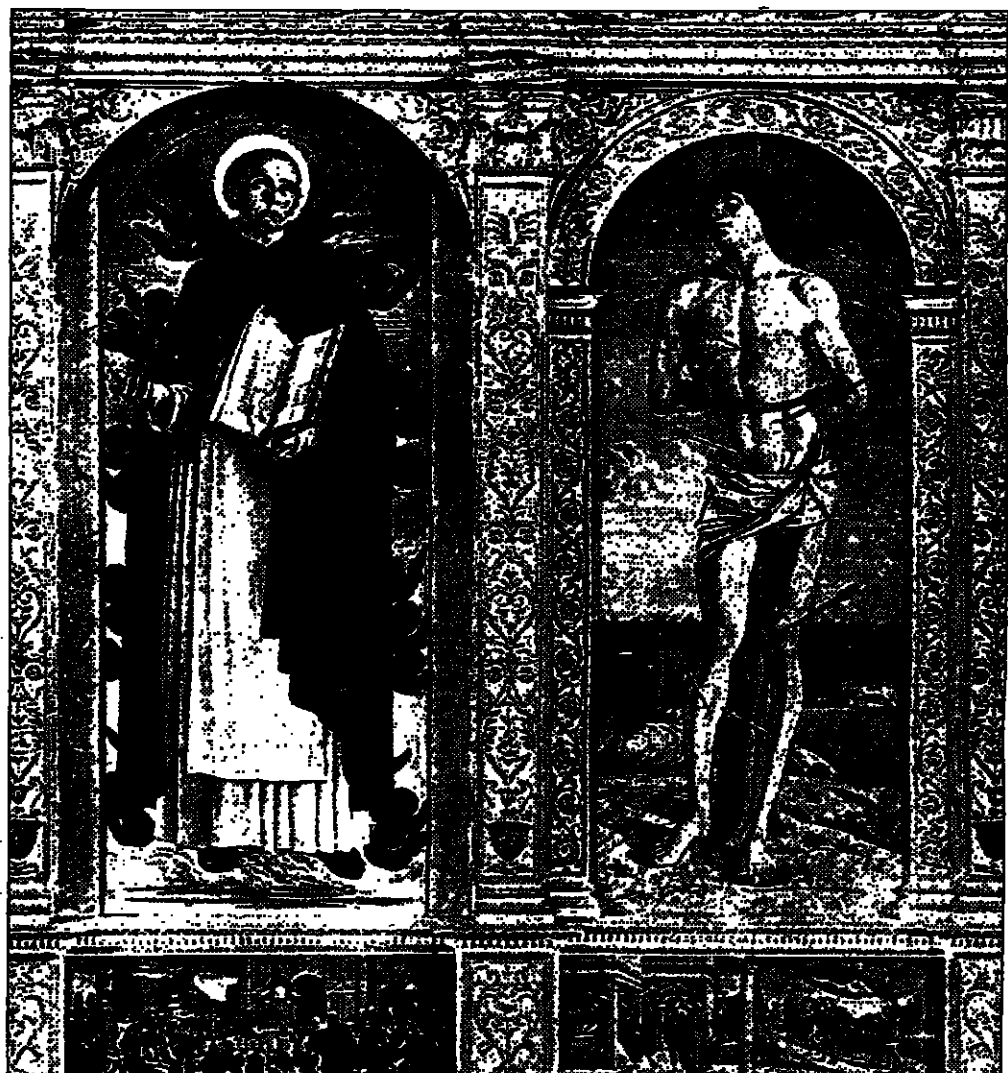
And what, secondly, was the "cutback in financing"? There has been no cutback, simply because there has never been any financing. In recent years, few if any Venetian churches have been able to afford enough sacristans, which is why the vast majority are closed from noon until four or five in the afternoon. In this respect at least, the situation today is no different from what it has been for years.

What, finally, is this "decision", and who has taken it? Father Aldo Marangoni, who is quoted as saying categorically—and, it seemed to me, rather

penulantly—that "this year tourists will find the churches shut", is not, as suggested, "responsible for church buildings in Venice"; nor, come to that, is anyone else. The two most important churches from the tourist's point of view—St Mark's and the Frari—are open for most of every day (the latter, understandably, takes a short break for lunch) and will, I have no doubt, remain so.

As for the parish churches, these open and close at the discretion of the parish priest. In the past, the only seriously inaccessible churches have been those—such as S Sebastiano with its dazzling Veroneses—which are not (though heaven knows why) considered three-star tourist sites and are not parochial either; and even these have been penetrable with a little patience. Have all the parish priests really got together and decided to close their doors? And, if so, why?

They would have, it must be said, a sort of case. Mass tourism does complicate their lives, and tourists—even the more serious-minded and responsible ones—seldom drop anything in the collection box unless they are asked to do so. It would not, therefore, be entirely incomprehensible if some of the less imaginative priests were to take the easy way out and bar them altogether. On the other hand, it would be extremely short-sighted. After all, it is not only the tourists who would suffer. Many parishioners like to drop in when passing—it is seldom that one goes into any Venetian church and finds it



Detail of the Bellini triptych stolen from SS Giovanni e Paolo and recovered undamaged

entirely empty—and no church is going to retain its local affections and loyalties for long if it is only open for Mass. Besides, the tourists are a potential source of income which the churches can ill afford to neglect. No one seems to resent the 500 lire—less than 25p— which they pay to enter the Frari

(bona fide worshippers still get in free), nor do they demur when the polite lady at Santa Maria dei Miracoli smilingly suggests a small donation as they leave. Why do not more of the other churches follow suit?

There are other possibilities also. Nearly every Venetian church boasts half a dozen or

more pictures of a standard that would do credit to any major art gallery, most of them hanging in sepulchral darkness. Perhaps one in a hundred is equipped with a slot-machine taking 500 lire pieces and providing perhaps two minutes of first-rate illumination. Why aren't the rest so equipped? The price, com-

pared with the actual cost of the electricity, represents an astronomical mark-up, and quite right too. Nobody complains, and the church makes a tidy little profit. (How one wishes that English parish churches would do the same—not, heaven knows, for their pictures, but for the overall lighting of the building—pointing out the switches rather than concealing them, and then making a similar profit by similar means.)

But to return to this mysterious "decision": speaking for myself, I shall still need to be persuaded. On my next visit to Venice, in a couple of months' time, I confidently expect to find the churches as open as they have ever been. If, on the contrary, I am confronted on every side by doors bolted and barred, I shall be disappointed but not unduly disheartened. In Italy, such a state of affairs could never last.

I remember how, a year or two ago, the Italian government decreed that every butcher in the country should, for reasons of hygiene, wear a little white hat. For about three weeks every butcher in the country did so; then the little white hats all disappeared overnight, and haven't been seen since. That is one of the great strengths of the Italians: they may make ridiculous laws—but don't we all?—but once the ridiculousness becomes apparent they simply ignore them. It will be the same, I feel sure, with the churches of Venice—in the unlikely event of the "decision" ever being implemented in the first place.

So if you're planning a visit, don't dream of cancelling it; and if, when you get there, you find the churches are shut as Father Marangoni claims they will be, I will eat a little white butcher's hat—if I can find one.

Viscount Norwich's History of Venice is published by Penguin at £14.99.



...and moreover

PHILIP HOWARD

Those of us who live in marginal constituencies have just received a personalised letter from the prime minister. Very handsome it is too, with our names and addresses neatly typed in above the stock text, and his name signed at the bottom in blueish green ink, or at the very least copied by a superior photocopying machine.

The least one could do was read it, instead of doing what one normally does to unsolicited junk mail from strangers. It gives one a shock. Not the message, which is, as one would expect in the circumstances, a plea to vote Conservative. What are shocking are the solecisms. The letter reads as though it were composed by an energetic foreign student in his first year at Ealing. It is clearly not the work of the prime minister himself. He has more important things to do than compose electioneering circulars; and he has a good plain English style, enviably unaffected in extemporary speech. But he must have approved the letter. Nobody expects politicians these days to write like Churchill, or Gladstone, or Burke. But it is shocking to spend so much time and effort on a mailshot, post-crested paper, stuffing letters into envelopes, and postage, and then to pay so little attention to the language. The lingo of politicians is debased. It always has been. They write and say too much too fast without stopping to think. But this letter treats the English language, and

hence the voters who receive the letter, with contempt. So, Dear Mr Major, thanks tons for yours. But please pass on to the FR persons who compose this rubbish some elementary precepts, as from a weary English teacher to the bad boys at the back of Remove.

I know that cliché is the element in which politicians (and journalists) operate. But why does every decision have to be crucial? Why must the country be both surfeit-ridden and inflation-ridden? Why must we have these tired phrases, which float across the mind without causing a ripple? If your people could think of an original epithet, we might sit up and pay attention. You say you have put Britain on course for steady and sustained growth. The metaphor of the ship of state goes back to Alcæus at least. But the trope is something musty. Alliteration is a good old English device. But steady and sustained make a doublet that goes together like Milton (or even John Maynard) and Keynes. Distinguish and define the difference for me, pray, between steady and sustained. The words are part of the political jargon and are permanently linked.

You would have caught my attention rather than my irritation if you had written stout and stable. I have heard "steady and sustained growth" so often from politicians' lips (never in practice from their performance) that they act as a substantial and solid soporific.

You write that you have

turned round (fashionable cliché) the poor old country and given it a new pride in the world. This is a gorilla idiom, which does not say what it means. Does the country take pride in the world, or the world in the country? We will never achieve that if we hit in the pockets (cliché) all those who look to [look at or towards, watch, take care of, depend on for, etc.] get on in life. Something wrong with this idiom, prime minister. "It is simply less opposed to complicatedly dishonest to make hosts of spending pledges while pretending that they would not cost anything." Those hosts sent me off down the wrong track. Host in this sense is an Old Testament word for an army of Midianites or, possibly, by transference, socialists. I was tripped up by it, not expecting to bump into an old-fashioned army in such grey party-political-speak, and took them to be the kind of hosts who have guests or keep ins. So I had to go back to the beginning, and read the sentence again. If you are trying to get us to read to the end of unsolicited letters, you should make them easy, and if possible a pleasure, to read. We have other things to do.

Almost immediately you do it again. "New ideas in training are set to do something or other. I took that 'set' to be the verb that is used to set extra work for idle students, not the jargon idiom for on course, as in the ship of state. I would vote for a party that treated English with respect, if I could find one.

Roses are red, Tories are blue

THE Labour party added a new and unexpected weapon to its political armoury last night: a poem by the Liverpool poet Adrian Henri—a lifelong Labour supporter—which portrays the Tory period in power as "ice stamped into crazy paving round polluted streams".

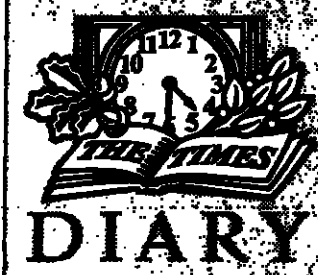
Yesterday, at the eve-of-conference meeting of the Welsh Labour party in Swansea, Neil Kinnock gave the debut reading of the 17-line poem, entitled "Winter Ending", but already known as The Walworth Road Ode.

Henri sent his poem last December to Neil Kinnock, who immediately decided to incorporate it into his Swansea speech.

The first half uses such images as "peeling waiting rooms" and "polluted streams" as metaphors for Tory rule, and begins with a quotation from T.S. Eliot's *Journey of the Magi*: "A cold coming we had of it".

The second half, quoted by Kinnock, heralds a rosy Labour dawn: Factories open like daffodils, trains flex rheumatic joints, computer-screens blink on in the sudden daylight. As the last cardboard boxes are swept away beneath bus bridges, the cold blue landscape of winter suddenly alive with bright red roses.

Whether voters will be chanting "Winter Ending" when they go to the polls remains to be seen. So far, Henri's fellow poets are reserving judgment. Former president of the Poetry Society Dannie Abse, a friend of Henri, is reticent: "Let's just say that all modern poets are subversive. In medieval days they wrote praising their lords. Now they undermine them."



Daughters' delight

THIS EVENING sees the first ever Fathers and Daughters dinner at the Garrick Club—a cunning ruse, say members, to prevent wayward daughters using the leap year tradition to make marriage proposals to unsuitable suitors.

Eighty members are bringing a total of 115 daughters, and the guest of honour is the actor Joss Ackland whose birthday falls today. He will be escorting all of his five daughters to the £30-a-head dinner, as well as his wife, Rosemary, who will be the only wife present.

Ackland (born 1928) plans to "propose a toast to the girls". He insists he is not keeping his daughters away from potential hus-

bands. "Nothing could make me happier if they proposed to someone. Only three of the five have been married, and one is divorced. Not only is it my 16th birthday, but I'm just about to have my 16th grandchild too," he says.

Bullish selling

A WEST COUNTRY farmer, Peter Wiltshire, has come up with the perfect contraption for ageing or insecure live-stock: the cow-zimmer-frame. The frame, scuffing on wheels with a large sling underneath, is designed for unfortunates beasts who fall over. Although the prototype is currently for bovine use only, one distinguished "diddle" has called for it



to be adapted for humans. Richard Ingrams, the maturing former editor of *Private Eye* who is keeping himself busy as editor of *The Oldie*, says: "The frame would sell excellently among my readers. It really would help me in my advancing age. I can also think of many chums who would find it useful after a night's drinking." Mr Wiltshire says he is willing to design one for Ingrams at a reduced price.

Pym and him

WHEN the literary career of novelist Barbara Pym ground to an alarming premature halt in the early 1960s, she turned to Philip Larkin for support. He confronted her publisher, Tom Stacey, of Jonathan Cape, and Charles Monteth, then chairman of Faber, who now says: "I thought her work wasn't good enough. I now know that I was wrong."

Larkin's support for Pym, which eventually led to her being published again by Macmillan, will be highlighted this autumn in his collected letters, edited by Anthony Thwaite. He says: "Larkin really admired Pym's novels before she went into the wilderness, and he wrote to her asking if he could review her work. She wrote back saying she'd just written a novel, and sent it to him. When it was rejected, Larkin cheered her up."

Clearly it is vital for aspiring novelists to maintain good relations with their poetic brethren: writers experiencing difficulties with publishers may like to contact Adrian Henri, c/o the Labour party, Walworth Road.

● The furor over the ordination of women priests has left Anglicans literally praying for spiritual guidance. At Matins on Wednesday, the Westminster congregation will for the first time hear a special prayer for divine inspiration on this controversial issue. Composed by the Abbey's chaplain, Rev Paul Ferguson, the prayer will be recited every day from the beginning of Lent until November, when the General Synod votes on the matter. The prayer seems to have united the warring camps, with both the Movement for the Ordination of Women, and Women against the Ordination of Women expressing enthusiasm for the Abbey's plan.



THE MOTHER OF FUDGES

Giving deadlines to President Saddam Hussein is a mug's game. Whenever he does consent to grant UN inspectors access to his nuclear laboratories or weapons plants, he does so with such churlishness that they cannot be sure he means it. When he prevaricates, he humiliates and he knows it. He has no prospect of respect or credibility, nothing to lose. He thumbs his nose at the world and tells it to do its worst.

The UN Security Council has ordered Saddam to destroy his factories making Scud missiles. But the only pressure the United Nations can apply on him is to threaten that its inspectors will leave Baghdad in a huff. They would then recommend to the security council that it continue sanctions indefinitely. It was a threat, but not much of one. Its weight depends entirely on how much Iraq wants sanctions lifted.

Iraq is sending a team to New York next month to petition the council to end the sanctions, saying that it has helped to locate and destroy ballistic, chemical and nuclear material. That petition will surely be rejected. Even if the destruction of the Scud factories is completed, Iraq's overall compliance with security council resolution 687 — mandating the destruction of Iraq's aggressive potential — has been inadequate.

None the less Iraq would like to end its international isolation. It cannot be reached by air, sell its oil or import spares for its industrial infrastructure. But except against small undiversified economies, trade sanctions are a vastly overrated weapon. The evidence of Rhodesia, South Africa, Libya and Panama suggests that sanctions even strengthen an economy, enforcing import-substitution and self-sufficiency.

Iraq's agriculture has prospered rapidly to fill the food gap. The country is not starving, although there is considerable hardship in the Kurdish north and Shia south, where the government has itself blockaded supplies. Saddam has chosen not to sell any oil at all rather than comply with the UN terms of sale which would hold some of the revenue in escrow to cover compensation to Kuwait and

UN relief operations in Iraq. Sanctions may embattle a country, but that does not mean they bring down its government, usually the reverse. In Panama the Americans had eventually to send in troops.

The problem for the UN in Iraq is that sanctions are the last figleaf between it and admitting that Saddam has virtually won the postwar diplomatic battle. He knows that talk of a "punitive" military strike by the United States is only for show. Washington may hamfistedly encourage nervousness among the Iraqi generals and in the presidential bunker. But a gratuitous bombing campaign against Iraqi cities would only win Saddam sympathy.

There are now only three outcomes in Iraq for a world that rashly declared the toppling of Saddam as a war aim additional to clearing him from Kuwait: win, lose or fudge. The first cannot be achieved without Saddam's removal from office, which appears beyond the wit or will of the Americans or anybody else. A bungled attempt at assassination would merely boost him. Leaving him alone implies open recognition that he cannot be further pressured and must be treated as a leader with whom the world must once again deal. That is to lose. It is morally and politically repugnant to the Gulf war victors.

Between winning and losing is the option of muddying the waters, by bluff and fudge. The United Nations must at least appear to maintain pressure. The latest resolutions, 707 and 715, mandate an unprecedentedly intrusive inspection regime. They justify overflights, blockades and regular ground monitoring of Iraqi military activity. Saddam has shown that he can keep most of his country cowed for much of the time. But he still appears reluctant to defy the UN completely. Bit by bit, he has swallowed the bitter measures being taken to ensure that he cannot attack his neighbours again. Such measures might one day so exasperate Iraq's army to prompt a change of regime. But until then, the world can only hope. And fudge is infinitely better than surrender.

ART OF FIRST REFUSAL

When politicians meddle with markets, trouble always ensues. When meddling takes place under a European Community mantle, the trouble is usually chaotic. The affair of the vanishing Holbein, allegedly heralding the "destruction of Britain's art heritage", is a case in point. A veritable Louvre of British paintings is reportedly on its way to salerooms in advance of revised controls on art disposals. The government is duly urged to "do something".

First principles first: private property should not be confiscated, either literally or by value, unless the public interest strongly demands it. If it does, there should be due compensation. Tens of thousands of private houses are devalued because they are listed as historic. This devaluing is justified on grounds of historic continuity: they are in some sense "part of Britain". Compensation takes the form of repair grants and certain tax reliefs on bequests and maintenance funds.

Movable works of arts, pictures, books and sculpture, are different. Many were produced overseas. Most, such as works by Holbein, Canaletto and Rembrandt now treated as if part of Britain's history, are broadly European. The trade in works of art has long crossed national boundaries. Over centuries, some nations have been gainers, others losers. To erect an iron curtain round a particular national market is a denial of the cosmopolitanism of art, as well as a direct invitation to smuggling.

The "Waverley" system operated in Britain for 36 years was a valiant attempt to marry a desire by national curators to acquire private works coming onto the market with a reluctance to confiscate value from owners or to encourage smuggling. It laid down a pause after the market had fixed the value of a work so that a British museum could attempt to raise the price so fixed. In other words, the nation should have the opportunity to ponder the work's heritage status and to decide how badly it wanted to possess the work. On

the whole the system has coped well, often with some help from public funds, though the definition of "British heritage" has sometimes been eccentric (embracing Titian, Leonardo and Fabergé).

The EC and the paucity of museum purchase grants are together upsetting this system. The EC is pressing for a list of heritage items to be made subject to internal trade controls. This would be confiscatory unless huge compensation sums were payable. There is some evidence that hard-pressed owners are considering quick sales to pre-empt such a listing, despite the arts minister implying in his letter to *The Times* today that only exceptional items would be included. The Spanish, in contrast, are reportedly planning to list for export control every pre-war work of art extant on Spain.

There is no justification for such additional market intervention in the case of paintings, by the EC or otherwise. Following the fiasco of the Woburn Canova last year, listing procedures should clearly be tightened for statuary and paintings which are integral to a listed historic house. Under historic buildings legislation they should be added to the list. In return, owners of such houses must, as the Historic Houses Association has said, be treated more generously for tax purposes. Policy should thus be aimed at discouraging owners from selling art at all.

If they sell, the system should help British galleries to buy in the market place. Purchase grants for museums have certainly declined and this is a fair complaint against government. But public parsimony does not justify further market restriction. If home galleries cannot buy, it is not fair to deny foreigners the chance of acquiring works that the British themselves once bought on an international market. This is not just an offence against property but chauvinist and illiberal. Raphael, Poussin, Velasquez, even Constable, do not hold some irreplaceable key to British history. They painted for the world and the world is entitled to bid for them.

QUESTIONING WEATHER

The cliché that the weather is the only safe topic of conversation has been confirmed this week by a hail of letters to the editor. Everybody watches or listens to the weather forecast. Weather stations and zones are an unchanging poetic incantation at dawn and after midnight. North Usire, South Usire, Fisher, German Bight... Michael Fish, Ian MacGaskill and the other weather men and women have become celebrities.

Television likes its forecasters to have tweedy suits and jokey, unthreatening voices, in contradistinction to newsmen who are meant to look and sound earnest. It has given its forecasters a moving toy-box of visual aids, scattering little orange balls, often partly covered with cloud and pierced with rain, like multicoloured confetti.

But to what effect? Correspondents to *The Times* have confessed that, while fascinated by the cold fronts and anticyclones, they do not understand or remember anything of what they are told with such high-tech ingenuity. Surveys suggest that British viewers have an abysmally low comprehension and recollection of the weather forecast. A psychologist writes that this is because of the complex and unpredictable structure of many forecasts, and the high speaking rate of forecasters. Old English weather folklore: when forecasters were explaining, viewers were complaining.

In the Seventies satellite photography encouraged meteorologists to try longer-range weather forecasts, but they turned out to be hopelessly unreliable. The development

of chaos theory — that storms in one part of the globe could be caused by a butterfly fluttering its wings in another — confirmed that this unreliability was systematic. Accurate forecasts could be made only a day or two ahead. And not always then: one evening the duty forecaster joked that a Frenchwoman had telephoned to say that a great hurricane was on its way to the south coast. After this storm had scythed through southern England, the Meteorological Office protested that it was in the business of scientific reporting, not vulgar prophecy.

Before Mr Fish and North Usire, Britons who wanted to know whether it was safe to go for a picnic or to cut a field of hay used to tap the barometer that hung in every hall. Before that they observed the behaviour of a dispirited bunch of seaweed dangling from a nail by the back door. Before that they consulted the weather proverbs in which English is so rich and so contradictory. A Briton announces which part of the country he comes from by whether he thinks a red sky in the morning is a warning for a shepherd or a sailor. (This misleading proverb derives from St Matthew's gospel, intended for a distant Levantine climate and audience.)

Weather and forecast are contradictory terms, like racing and certainty or executive and cameo. The only infallible weather prophecy in Britain is: prepare for the worst and you will not be disappointed. Absolute unpredictability is weather's defining virtue. Perhaps that is what our unintelligible forecasters are trying to say.

Eve of action plea on Twyford Down

From Professor Martin Biddle and others

Sir, We write as interested parties directly involved in the proposed M3 extension outside Winchester, work on which could start as early as this Sunday.

As is well known, it will entail the destruction of an area of quite extraordinary conservation and archaeological value, including two sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs), two scheduled ancient monuments, and an area of outstanding natural beauty.

The UK government is currently the subject of legal action from the European Commission concerning the question of whether or not the UK has correctly transposed the EC directive on environmental impact assessment into UK legislation. A "reasoned opinion" from the European Commission is expected during the next month yet the Department of Transport is proceeding with the M3 extension before this matter is resolved.

Though many of us do not necessarily believe that the right route has been chosen, we acknowledge the strength of the argument for completing the M3 between Southampton and London. But the damage that will be done by the current route far outweighs the benefits to be derived from it.

There is a way of mitigating that damage: by agreeing to tunnel under rather than through Twyford Down along the same route. The Department of Transport has calculated that this would add an extra £85 million to the project costs, a large sum when seen as a proportion of the extension itself, but very small when set against the cost of the whole motorway.

Time after time we have heard from the Department of Transport that it aspires to reconcile its new road-building programme with the highest environmental standards. This decision, sadly amongst several others, gives the lie to that aspiration.

The prime minister has shown considerable personal interest in these matters, particularly in the run-up to the important Earth Summit next June which he plans to attend. How will it be possible for him or any potential successor to urge the Brazilians and Malaysians to protect their rainforests, or African countries to protect their grasslands, or Indonesia to protect its mangrove swamps, when we ourselves are apparently incapable of protecting our own unique and treasured habitats and landscapes?

From March 1 onwards, despite the continuing opposition of the government's own advisers in English Nature, the Department of Transport will assume a free hand to start the destruction of the River Itchen watermeadows SSSI. Before it is too late the government must put a halt to this desecration, and to demonstrate in practice that the protection of the environment has some validity in this most important case.

Yours sincerely,
MARTIN BIDDLE
(President, Twyford Down Association),
DAVID BELLAMY
(Royal Society for Nature Conservation),
DAVID CROKER
(Twyford Down Association),
ANDREW LEES
(Friends of the Earth),
RICHARD MABEY,
GEORGE MEDLEY
(World Wide Fund for Nature),
JONATHAN PORRITT
(Friends of the Earth),
DEREK RATCLIFFE
(Chief Scientist,
Nature Conservancy Council, 1973-89),
FIONA REYNOLDS
(Council for the Protection
of Rural England),
MIRIAM ROTHSCCHILD,
WILLIAM WILKINSON
(Chairman, Nature Conservancy Council,
1983-91).

Twyford Down Association,
The Old Farm House,
Lower Preshaw Farm,
Upham, Hampshire.
February 29.

School dispute

From the Editor of Index on Censorship

Sir, At the risk of heresy, I think there is something fundamentally, and socially, wrong with the cause of Messrs Ghulam Shaiba and co. at Stratford School (report, February 25). The governors are in breach of basic rules of courtesy and require a respect for the customs and practices of a host, be that home, institution, or country.

At the root of the Asian governors' cause there appears to be an attempt to change social rules and religion — by changing the nature of a school financed by all taxpayers and funded by the state — in a section of the country where they have made their homes.

Railway contrast

From Mr Geoffrey Willetts

Sir, While staying with our son in a small Belgian town recently we had occasion to use the local rail service. The station had a restaurant, bookshop and patisserie and trains ran on time. The booking office advertised excursions to Britain and informed us that tickets could be booked there to any station in Europe.

This week I went to Stafford station to enquire about facilities on

Improved regulation of Lloyd's

From the Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive of Lloyd's

Sir, Mr Ian Hay Davidson's letter of February 27 may seem like a charter for the future of Lloyd's. In fact, most of his points are out of date because of continuous and rapid changes in the last six years. These include greater regulatory authority for the chief executive, the speedy implementation of 70 recommendations of an independent enquiry into our regulatory arrangements, the institution of independent syndicate loss review and the streamlining of claims and other business operations.

The composition of the Council of Lloyd's has altered significantly since 1986 when Mr Hay Davidson resigned. The members of Council who work in the market are outnumbered by those elected to represent the view of external Names together with the nominated members who are individually people of eminence, with no financial interest in the Lloyd's market, and are appointed with the approval of the Bank of England to represent the public interest.

The suggestion that the nominated members, to take only one component of the Council, are not fully conscious of their obligations to policy-holders and members of Lloyd's is unsustainable.

A Lloyd's-administered arbitration process was announced in May last year, together with appropriate conciliation arrangements for internal commercial disputes. A bylaw to deal with open years and an in-house insurance company to take over their liabilities are already in place. But the essence of the open year problem is uncertainty about exposure to future claims on past policies, where liability and the size of court awards is unpredictable. Domestic arbitration at Lloyd's alone cannot resolve these matters.

On the conditions for Lloyd's future commercial success, underwriting for market share in the last three years of depressed premium rates and a statistically unprecedented number of catastrophe losses would hardly have improved Lloyd's financial position, rather the reverse. More profitable underwriting is plainly desirable, at Lloyd's as in the rest of the insurance industry.

Moreover, the need for even greater professionalism and better service to policy-holders, not least in the payment of claims, has been recognised in the actions which Lloyd's has already taken.

Whether the separation of regulation from market support and direc-

tion is the way forward, as the task force proposed, is now being studied by a working party chaired by Sir Jeremy Morse, a nominated member of Council. Mr Hay Davidson may be right in implying that this is actually a matter of perception rather than reality. Clearly one of the issues is whether there continues to be at Lloyd's one wholly independent deputy chairman and chief executive, an issue which was central to Mr Hay Davidson's own resignation.

It is reassuring to see that, contrary to his remarks as reported in another newspaper, Mr Hay Davidson is not "advocating the liquidation of Lloyd's". It would certainly be unwise to do so. After three difficult trading years in the insurance industry, for Lloyd's as for most of our competitors in the western hemisphere, the Lloyd's policy is still backed by assets of about £18,000 million, and premium rates are rising.

The regulatory and commercial developments of the last six years, together with the implementation of the task force proposals, should, in my independent view, ensure that Lloyd's prospers for a great deal longer than Mr Hay Davidson fears.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN LORD, Deputy Chairman
and Chief Executive,
Lloyd's,
1 Lime Street, EC3,
February 27.

From Mr M. A. Fisher

Sir, The letter from Mr Cazenove (February 27) seems to be yet another instance of a Lloyd's insider — in his case "a member of the broking community" — pontificating sanctimoniously about outsiders. It is noticeable that these gentlemen, from the chairman of Lloyd's downwards, seldom put any figures forward.

I am an outsider and the forecast results for 1989 for my six worst syndicates show losses of 750 per cent, 300 per cent, 250 per cent, 230 per cent, 230 per cent and 100 per cent, with the overall loss well in excess of 100 per cent. If Mr Cazenove can match these figures then I will accept his right to call me a "whinger". If not then I suggest that the distortion to which he refers falls on his head not mine.

Yours faithfully,
M. A. FISHER,
35 Piccadilly, W1.

Weekend Money letters, page 28

UK-India extradition

From Mr Max Madden, MP for Bradford West (Labour)

Sir, Why are Britain and India negotiating an extradition treaty? A Home Office official has admitted that an extradition treaty offers no formal advantages in extradition matters to India which it does not enjoy already as a Commonwealth country. We must assume, therefore, India sees some political advantage from having an extradition treaty with Britain.

Church 'superiority'

From Canon R. J. Harris

Sir, I fear Mr Michael Murphy and Canon John McNamara (letters, February 13) must have been deeply unhappy when Pope John Paul and Archbishop Runcie prayed together in Canterbury Cathedral in 1982. How confusing for the faithful to see the Holy Father giving a joint blessing with a schismatic layman in bishop's dress.

To many Englishmen, however, it was a powerful and deeply moving symbol of a recognition of the Anglican Communion as in some sense a sister church and of a mutual desire to end 450 years of enmity and division. The gracious and deeply sensitive words of the Pope, who had clearly listened to the English Catholic hierarchy, made many Anglicans believe in the possibility of accepting a papal primacy of loving service.

What has happened since? The

Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission Final Report (ARCIC) was first submitted to the national Catholic hierarchies. The English one approved it enthusiastically. So we read old many others. These responses have now been overruled. The present day apostles have been silenced. The Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has instead damned the report with faint praise. This is the response of the Pope's organ, but it cannot be truthfully described as the response of the whole of the Catholic church.

Canon McNamara thinks that we should "submit to the supreme and universal jurisdiction of the Pope". If we are speaking plainly, Anglicans could never accept such a jurisdiction with the Pope lording it over his flock as many of his predecessors have done. There is no sign of any such jurisdiction in the New Testament church. If the Catholic church accepted a restoration of the New Testament pattern of apostolic

authority, Anglicans could gladly accept a papal primacy of love and service as described by Hans Küng and the ARCIC report. Our Lord and St Peter himself describe how it should be exercised.

Yours sincerely,
RAYMOND HARRIS,
2 Ferndale Road, Swindon, Wiltshire.
From Mr H. M. Stewart
Sir, May I remind Mr Murphy of the old story of the two missionaries, one Protestant, the other Roman Catholic, in a remote part of Africa. As they were the only Europeans within several hundred miles they used to meet occasionally and give each other a meal. "It is good that we should be friends," said the Protestant, "after all we each serve God in our own way." "Yes," replied the Roman Catholic, "you in your way, I in His".

I have the honour to be, Sir,
H. M. STEWART,
Maresfield, Beech Way,
Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire.

Floral insight

From Mrs Linda J. Parke

Sir, A few suggestions for flowers in Chelsea's "psychic garden" (Mrs Shaw's letter, February 25): deadly nightshade and enchanter's nightshade, of course, and isn't there something known as "Dead Men's Fingers"? How about Asphodel, the immortal flower of Greek Elysium; or the rare *Mariposa*, which only blooms by the light of the blue moon and is, I believe, a certain cure for lycanthropy; or wild garlic to keep the vampires at bay?

And how about mandrake for black magic (but only if it is pulled up by a dog and chain, since the shriek it utters when pulled from the earth freezes a man's heart to stone)?

Yours sincerely,
LINDA J. PARKE,
Field View, Hawridge,
Chesham, Buckinghamshire.

From Mrs David I. Bruce

Sir, Mrs Shaw should certainly look out for a "Prophet Flower" (*Artemisia pulchra*) and also a "Sensitive Plant" (*Mimosa pudica*). A "Mourning Widow" (*Geranium phaeum*) would no doubt feel quite at home, maybe

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071) 782 5046.

Review of art export methods

From the Minister for the Arts

Sir, I have seen no evidence to suggest, as stated in your report today, that art works, whether by "Holbein, Canaletto, Rembrandt and Zoffany" or others, have been "rushed" into the auction rooms because of the recent review of present arrangements conducted by the independent reviewing committee on the export of works of art.

The review was commissioned by the government in response to the committee's own continuing and grave concern about the effectiveness of the Waverley system in retaining our heritage items in the country. I therefore asked them to examine whether that system could be improved and whether any alternative system to regulate export of works of art, such as listing, should be considered.

The committee would obviously prefer to see additional government funding to the tune of at least £15-20 million a year. But it recommended that if this funding was not available, it would be feasible to establish a list of very important items and that, given continued restraint on public spending, these items could be prohibited from export. Such a list would be highly selective and restricted to the really outstanding heritage items.

I have an open mind on these recommendations. I quite see the strengths of the arguments against listing; but it is reasonable and responsible that we should consider all of the available options when priorities are rising so steeply for pre-eminent items. I must also challenge the comments of Graham Greene and Sir Hugh Leggar. You report Mr Greene as saying that government is not addressing this problem; the review I have instituted patently proves otherwise.

Sir Hugh alleges that government cannot make up its mind on this important subject. I have asked for comments from interested parties by the end of March so that they could be taken into account before I take any decision: this is not procrastination. Sir Hugh does a disservice by distorting the objectives behind government consultations with those involved. This is not a sign of a tired government but of robust common sense.

Yours sincerely,
TIM RENTON,
Office of Arts and Libraries,
Horse Guards Road, SW1.
February 27.

views which are unpopular with Delhi.

It is wrong that a British government, in its dying days in office, should be signing treaties and agreements with India which have important political consequences. The negotiations should be halted: a new British government should decide whether the negotiations resume.

Yours sincerely,
MAX MADDEN,
House of Commons,
February 25.

authority, Anglicans could gladly accept a papal primacy of love and service as described by Hans Küng and the ARCIC report. Our Lord and St Peter himself describe how it should be exercised.

Yours sincerely,
RAYMOND HARRIS,
2 Ferndale Road, Swindon, Wiltshire.

From Mr H. M. Stewart
Sir, May I remind Mr Murphy of the old story of the two missionaries, one Protestant, the other Roman Catholic, in a remote part of Africa. As they were the only Europeans within several hundred miles they used to meet occasionally and give each other a meal. "It is good that we should be friends," said the Protestant, "after all we each serve God in our own way." "Yes," replied the Roman Catholic, "you in your way, I in His".

I have the honour to be, Sir,
H. M. STEWART,
Maresfield, Beech Way,
Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire.

in the shade of a "Full Moon Maple" (*Acer japonica*).
She must, however, be careful to avoid the "Voodoo Lily" (*Saurau-matum venosum*) unless armed with a protective sprig of the Good Luck plant (*Cordylone fruticosa*).

I am, yours faithfully,
D. I. BRUCE,
59 Fishpool Street,
St Albans, Hertfordshire.

From Mrs D. R. Day
Sir, May I put in a plea for the shrinking violet?

Yours faithfully,
DIANA R. DAY,
Pershore House, Defford Road,
Pershore, Worcestershire.

From Mrs Arnold Rakusen
Sir, Mrs Shaw might have a fleeting encounter with *Lysimachia sphegodes*, find a plethora of dead-nettles and an entire herbarium (*Horis siccus*) in the Chelsea Psychic Garden.

Yours truly,
PHILIPPA RAKUSEN,
Ling Beeches, Ling Lane,
Scarcroft, Thorne,
Leeds, West Yorkshire.

From Mrs Belinda Hadden

Sir, Dead ones?
Faithfully,
BELINDA HADDEN,
21 Rumbold Road, SW6.

OBITUARIES

SAMUEL HAYAKAWA

Samuel Ichiji Hayakawa, a controversial scholar and politician who achieved instant fame for his dramatic stand against the American student protest movement in the 1960s, died of a stroke in Greenbrae, California, on February 27 aged 85. He was born in Vancouver, British Columbia, on July 18, 1906.

SLEEPING Sam, as he was known for his habit of dozing off during debates in the US senate, was certainly wide awake on the afternoon of December 2, 1968. Then, as president of San Francisco State College, he jumped on to a platform being used by striking students and ripped the wires from their sound amplifying system. A photograph of the raging academic, who stood at five foot three inches, topped by his habitual Tam o' Shanter cap, was reproduced in newspapers all over America. In that moment he became the symbol of adult authority over rebellious youth and was launched, willy-nilly, into politics.

Hayakawa had never been a slave to convention. In 1937, eight years after emigrating from Canada to the United States when his parents returned to Japan, he married a white girl who was one of his students at the University of Wisconsin. Marriages between whites and Asians were not recognised in many states at the time, including California, and though Hayakawa wanted to go to the West Coast and his bride had to stay in Chicago for nearly two decades.

As it turned out, this had its advantages. On the outbreak of war with Japan in 1941, more than 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry were rounded up on the West Coast and placed in internment camps — a fate which Hayakawa



escaped. In later years he was to anger many Japanese-Americans by asserting that the internment experience had been beneficial, because it helped many of their young people to break out of the traditional paternalistic family structure.

As a scholar, Hayakawa's speciality was the use of language. His first book, *Language in Action*, was published in 1941 and became an

instant popular success. It was selected by the Book of the Month Club, and adopted widely as a high school semantics text. The book was written, he said, in response to the rise of Hitler and the success of his propaganda, because "people have got to understand something about the way language works". Hayakawa worked on the theory, also propounded by the Polish scholar

Alfred Korzybski, that words are not the same as reality; that at best they only lead to an understanding of real meaning and at worst actually camouflage it. He expanded on the idea in his later work *Language in Thought and Action*, which was published in 1949 and is still in print. In both books Hayakawa concentrated on expressing his ideas in readable form — a practice which led many fellow academics to look down their noses and accuse him of lack of scholarship. He bristled at the accusation. "It's fatal to your scholarly reputation," he said in a 1984 interview. "If you write things everyone can understand, you're a cheap populariser."

War-time restrictions prevented Hayakawa from becoming a US citizen until 1954, at which time he was lecturing at the University of Chicago and writing a newspaper column on his spare-time passion — jazz. He and his wife soon moved to California, where he became a professor of English at San Francisco State College and its president some 13 years later.

The student strike that brought him to prominence, unlike most demonstrations of the period, had nothing to do with the Vietnam war. It was touched off by the suspension of a black instructor, demands for a black studies programme and increased enrolment of minority students. Hayakawa responded by banning student demonstrations and speeches, which resulted in the arrest of more than 400 students and faculty members who supported them. The convictions were later overturned by the California Supreme Court as an abrogation of First Amendment rights.

One of his opponents at the time, Eric Solomon, an English professor supporting the students, said of Ha-

yakawa two decades later: "We opposed him but admired him — against our will, really — for the skill with which he established himself." Hayakawa remained his college presidency until 1973, when he retired and switched his political allegiance from Democrat to Republican. The Democrats, he said, were responsible for the youth rebellion of the 1960s. At the age of 70 he ran for the US senate in 1976, winning a close race and becoming known as one of the most conservative members of his party. While in the senate, where he remained for only one term, he opposed busing to achieve racial integration in schools, tried to make English the official language of the US, supported a reduction in the minimum wage for young workers, and worked unsuccessfully to withhold public financing from universities with affirmative action programmes. That he remained awake long enough to do such things was something of a mystery to those who observed him in the chamber. Hayakawa admitted that he sometimes drifted off but only, he said, when a speaker was taking 20 minutes to say something that could be said in two.

By the end of his term his wealthy conservative backers in California had deserted him and he soon abandoned his campaign in the 1982 election. However, he was not finished with politics. In 1986, declaring that bi-lingual ballots were "profoundly racist" and that "the most rapid way of getting out of the ghetto is to speak good English," he successfully promoted a ballot initiative to make English the official language of California. Hayakawa is survived by his wife, Margedant, two sons and a daughter.

AVRAHAM HARMAN

Avraham Harman, former Israeli ambassador to Washington and president of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, died in Jerusalem on February 23, aged 77. He was born in London in 1914.

PRESIDENT and later chancellor of the Hebrew University — "the university of the Jewish people" as he liked to call it — Avraham "Abe" Harman played a leading role in rebuilding and expanding the original campus of the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus after the Six Day War of 1967 and in attracting Jewish students to it from all over the world. His life was imbued with the course of Zionism and with forging links between Israel and the Jewish diaspora. As a youngster in London he played a leading role in the Hahabonim (youth) movement (which his older brother Philip helped to found) and alongside Abba (Aubrey) Eban, was an active member of the Federation of Zionist Youth.

In 1938, shortly after he earned a law degree from Wadham College, Oxford, he emigrated to what was then Palestine from where he was soon sent to South Africa as an emissary of the Jewish Agency. Later he headed the English section of the agency's information department, spearheading the information effort against British mandatory rule and for the establishment of a Jewish state.

Following the founding of the state in 1948 Harman was appointed deputy director of the press and information division of the ministry of foreign affairs and a year later became Israel's first consul general in Montreal. Then followed a series of diplomatic postings in North America, culminating in his appointment as Israel's ambassador to Washington in 1959. In 1967, when Arab armies massed on the Jewish state's borders and Israel prepared to take pre-emptive action, Harman played a crucial liaison role in the intense contacts with Lyndon Johnson's administration and in the contacts and confrontations at the United Nations. He also helped prepare the ground for the ensuing close relationship in which the US became Israel's chief

political and military supporter.

In 1968 he returned to Jerusalem to become president of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Israel's victory in the Six Day War had restored free access to the old university campus on Mount Scopus which had been denied since 1948 when the Jordanians captured the eastern part of Jerusalem; while in West Jerusalem there were 13,000 students on the Givat Ram campus.

Abe Harman turned his energies to the rebuilding and expanding of the old campus, travelling the world seeking funds and support for the tremendous task from



Jewish communities everywhere. He also established the school of overseas students intended to attract, particularly, Jewish students from the diaspora to spend a year at the Hebrew University, and also to offer preparatory courses for immigrant students seeking university degrees in a language and society that was new to them.

He left that post in 1983 and was appointed university chancellor, a position he held until his death. Today the Hebrew University boasts seven faculties, 12 schools and 21,000 students on the Mount Scopus campus which Abe Harman brought back to life.

He was also founding president of the Israel Public Council for Society Jewry devoting much time and effort to the cause of Soviet Jewry and to the absorption of Soviet Jewish scientists at the Hebrew University and elsewhere in Israel.

He is survived by his wife, Zena, a former member of the Knesset, two daughters and a son.

VALENTINO BOMPIANI

Valentino Bompiani, doyen of Italian publishing and the man who in 1929 translated and published Hitler's *Mein Kampf* to warn Italians against the folly of Nazism, died in Milan on February 23 aged 94.

VALENTINO Bompiani was for over 60 years one of the guiding forces in the development of Italian culture. He promoted important Italian writers and introduced Italian readers to authors from the rest of the world, and his name became synonymous with quality publishing.

"Val", as he was known to his friends, was born in Ascoli Piceno, in the Marche region of central Italy. His father was an army general and he himself wanted to become a naval officer. But he suffered a bad break in his arm while playing football and studied law instead. Afterwards he worked briefly as a journalist for various Rome newspapers and as an executive for the Nestlé company.

His first contact with publishing was when he went to work for Mondadori, still one of the leading Italian publishing houses. He then moved on to another publisher, Unita, which he left in 1929 to avoid having to publish a re-written version of Manzoni's *I promessi sposi*.

He decided to set up in business on his own with just a secretary and a messenger. One of the first books he published was a translation of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, which was drawn to his attention by a Jewish friend who rightly believed that Italians should be informed about what was happening — and being written — in Germany.

Before and during the war he published six weeks by Alberto Moravia, which were immediately confiscated by the Fascist authorities. Bompiani managed, however, to bring to Italy books by John Steinbeck, Erskine Caldwell and John Erskine in spite of the regime's aversion to anything Anglo-American. But about 100 other books by

various authors published by Bompiani were banned by Mussolini's censors.

In 1938 Valentino Bompiani went to Berlin for an international convention of publishers. He returned from Germany shaken by what he had seen of Nazism and realising, as he said afterwards, "that we were nearing a catastrophe." He therefore decided to prepare what he described as a "Noah's Ark of everything man has written." The result, which was eventually published in 1946, was a 12-volume encyclopaedia with over 22,000 entries called *Dictionary of Works and People of all Times and all Literatures*. It stands as the major reference work to come out under the Bompiani imprint.

After the war Bompiani published many of the major Italian writers, including



Moravia, Eco, Flaiano, Piovone and Zavattini. He also introduced Italian readers to foreign authors like Huxley, Faulkner, Nabokov and Pynchon. He also had a personal interest in the theatre and for two decades after the war edited the main Italian theatre magazine, *Sipario*, as well as writing a number of plays of his own. Valentino Bompiani left the active directorship of his publishing house in 1973 but stayed on as honorary president and consultant until his recent illness. He leaves his wife, Nini, and daughters, Ginevra and Emanuela.

Sandra Wells, variety artist, also known as Joy Wilby, died on February 6 aged 86. She was born Ruth Lilian Clarke in Torquay on January 16, 1906.

SANDRA Wells was a professional pantomime cat. Many, who were children in the Fifties and Sixties, will remember her in *Dick Whittington* and *Puss in Boots* alongside such comedians as Richard Hearn (Brixton), Bud Flanagan (New Theatre, Oxford, 1966) and Tommy Trinder (Lewisham).

At the age of four she told a friend of the family she wanted to "go on the stage". This idea was at first firmly discouraged by her parents, who later relented and sent her for ballet lessons. Playing mostly comedy and character parts, she learned her craft in repertory at the Theatre Royal, Margate, and on tour with one of England's last travelling theatres, owned by the Immans. Eventually she had the confidence to go solo in variety and became the flamenco dancer Janita.

In 1934 she married Mark Bennett, director of the Bennett Brothers Variety Show and until her divorce in 1940 toured with that company in England and abroad with a

SANDRA WELLS

song and dance act. During this period she took on the name of Joy Wilby. She was also an accomplished xylophone and saxophone player and in this capacity joined ENSA, entertaining troops at garrison theatres at home and later in western Europe.

In 1946 her agent, recognising her talent for speaking without moving her lips, advised a further change to her act and under her final stage name of Sandra Wells she became one of the few female ventriloquists. She evolved an act of considerable originality, which introduced a doll called Horace Higgs. Together they managed to top the bill at Dublin's Theatre Royal.

In 1953 the doll was exchanged for a cat's life. When Bobby Vernon retired after forty years as a pantomime cat, Sandra Wells decided to buy his cat costume and spend the rest of her stage life in pantomime. She belonged to that generation of variety artists whose toughness was never allowed to become abrasive. To her friends and colleagues she was totally loyal.

In 1947 she married violinist William McLean, who died in 1989.



Sandra Wells as Dick Whittington's cat

PROFESSOR SIDNEY BENJAMIN

Professor Sidney Benjamin, actuary, died on February 18 aged 63. He was born on June 6, 1928.

SIDNEY Benjamin's fundamental quality was his perceptive and seminal interest in every branch of actuarial science coupled with the ability to express his often forthright views in simple lucid terms. His work in 1965 in connection with the collapse of the Vehicle and General Insurance Company greatly enhanced interest in the way in which actuarial methods could be applied to general insurance and led to the institute introducing this subject in its education and examination system. More recently he

turned his attention to the transaction of general insurance at Lloyd's of London and his most recent work was in the area of funding long-term care for the elderly.

Although essentially an actuary, Sidney Benjamin was well-known and highly respected by members of many other professions in the UK and throughout the world. In 1988 he was awarded the Gold Medal of the Institute of Actuaries, a distinction accorded to only 11 actuaries since its inauguration in 1919. In 1985 he was appointed a visiting professor at City University.

Benjamin took a degree in mathematics at Cambridge in 1952 and became a fellow

of the Institute of Actuaries in 1957, marking that occasion by presenting to the institute, that evening, the first of his many papers: "Putting Computers onto Actuarial Work". In all he published about a dozen papers on a wide range of subjects. He was a frequent, kindly but challenging contributor to the discussions of the papers of others; his remarks were invariably both apt and succinct.

He served the institute as a member of its council in four terms extending over 20 years and was a vice president from 1975 to 1978. He was especially interested in actuarial research and was chairman of the institute's research committee for over 20 years.

He was a fellow of the British Computer Society and also of the Royal Statistical Society where he served a term on the council and also as chairman of the general application section. In the United States he was for some years a member of the Society of Actuaries research committee.

His business career commenced with Prudential Assurance, and after a period with Ferranti Computers he joined Bacon & Woodrow, Consulting Actuaries, in 1962, becoming a partner in 1963. His clients included insurance companies, friendly societies, pension associations and pension funds.

He is survived by his wife, their son and daughter.

Forerunners of man older than thought

By NORMAN HAMMOND

SOME of humanity's oldest ancestors lived at an even earlier date than thought: new tests in Olduvai gorge in Tanzania have added tens of thousands of years to the age of the famous Bed I, from which many important hominid fossils have been excavated.

Olduvai gorge was investigated by the late Louis Leakey and his wife, Mary, for several decades. Their discovery of *Australopithecus boisei*, called "nutcracker man" from his huge molars, in 1959 opened a new chapter in human palaeontology.

Further discoveries in Bed I included specimens of *Homo habilis*, "handy man", the most ancient species to be

given the appellation *Homo*. The sequence of deposits at Olduvai was dated by potassium-argon dating of the different tuffs (rock formed from volcanic ash) which sandwiched the sedimentary layers containing the hominid remains. The tuff known as 1B was dated to 1.79 million years ago.

New US researchers at the Institute of Human Origins at Berkeley have applied a new method, laser-fusion argon-40/argon-39 dating on single mineral grains, and obtained earlier ages: 1B is placed at 1.87 million years, and Tuff 1C above it at 1.75 million years.

Source: *Nature* 354: 145-149.

Church news

Clergy appointments

The Rev Robert Reiss, Team Rector, Cranbury, Team Ministry: to be Rural Dean of Grantham (Lincoln).

The Rev Andrew Stokes, Chaplain and Personal Assistant to the Bishop of Lincoln: to be Canon and Proctor of Lincoln Cathedral (Lincoln).

The Rev Peter D Taylor, Vicar, St Paul, Farington: to be Vicar, Euxton (Blackburn).

The Rev Thomas Taylor, Chaplain of Lord Wandsworth College, Long Sutton, Nottingham: to be Vicar, St Leonard, Wallingford, Oxford (Oxford).

The Rev Canon Peter R Thompson, Vicar, Polegate, was installed Prebend of Heathfield in Chichester Cathedral on 19 September 1991 (Chichester).

The Rev Frederick Thornt, Assistant Curate, Sleaford: to be Priest-in-Charge, Harlaxton (Lincoln).

The Rev Richard W Willcock.

Resignations and retirements

The Rev Wendy Cranidge, Parish Deacon (NSM), Medburyham (Lincoln): to resign as from 15 March.

The Rev Peter Davis, Team Vicar, Bishop Edward King Church, Grimsby Team Ministry (Lincoln): to resign as from 29 April.

The Rev John Downman, Vicar, Legbourne (Lincoln): to retire as from 31 May.

The Rev Edwin Matthews, Rector, Chichester (Chichester): to retire as from 30 April.

The Rev Canon Bernard G Moore, as Honorary Canon of Blackburn Cathedral, Vicar, Christ Church, Charnock Rick-

ard, and Rural Dean of Chorley (Blackburn): to retire as from the end of June.

The Rev John G E Stone, Curate, Stansand (and Forestside) (Chichester): to retire as from 31 March.

The Rev Samuel J Tyler, Vicar, Great Ilford, St John the Evangelist, Seven Kings (Chesham): to retire as from 5 April.

The Rev Canon Hugh Williams, Vicar, Holy Trinity, Bolton-le-Sands, and an Honorary Canon of Blackburn Cathedral (Blackburn): to retire as from 10 August.

The Rev Canon Hugh Williams.

Latest wills

Comtesse Barbara de Brie, of Boyton Manor, Warminster, Wilt, left estate valued at £29,724,890 net.

She left £1,000,000 to Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge, £250,000 each to Salisbury Cathedral, and the Victoria & Albert Museum, for the benefit of the Theatre Museum, £100,000 each to Royal Chesham School, Catholic Church, Tisbury and the Salisbury and John Wiltshire Museum Trust.

Other estates include (net, before tax paid): Mr Kenneth Walter Barker, of Westerham, Kent, £794,472.

Mrs Barbara Saunders, of Luton, Beds, £816,851.

Mr Harold Brown, of Lowlands, Warwickshire, late company director, £913,765.

Mrs Irene Joan Aubrey Glaisher of London SW15, £729,055.

Mr John Harnden, of Hythe, Kent, £522,594.

Kathleen Banner Jessop of Rhos-on-Sea, Chyd, £1,395,504.

Mr Philip Leigh of Telford Avenue, London SW2, £519,362.

Mrs Edith Mary Sharpe of Market Rasen, Lincs, £528,828.

Mr Jesse Cecil Stuckler of Wiltshire, Avon, £624,265.

FEB 29 ON THIS DAY 1928

Patrick Hamilton has been described as the first Scottish martyr of the Reformation. His grisly death provided an important impetus to the movement.

PATRICK HAMILTON. A ST. ANDREWS MARTYR.

On February 29, 1528, Patrick Hamilton, a "promontory" of the Scottish Reformation, was burned at the stake in front of the gateway of St. Salvator's, now the United College, St. Andrews. He had done little of note during his life and in his teaching there was no striking originality to mark him out as one of the foremost leaders in the new movement that was stirring in the Church. Yet the circumstances of his death have given him a high place among the Scottish Reformers and were of great avail in undermining the power of the Catholic hierarchy and spreading the new doctrines throughout the land.

Hamilton's youth — he was but 24 — his fine and dignified bearing, his high courage and his noble birth — for he was of the great family of Hamilton, then struggling with the Douglas for the mastery, and through his mother, Catherine Stewart, he was of Royal blood, a great-grandson of James II — all these, together with the cruelty of his fate and the unseemly haste with which it was accomplished, won the undying admiration of the Scottish people.

Patrick Hamilton, the younger son of the noble family, was destined for the Church, and while still a boy, he was granted the Abbey of Perne, in Rosshire, a place which he probably never saw. It was a typical appointment of the time, such as provoked strong popular indignation against the abuses in the Church. Yet the income

enabled him to proceed to Paris, where he studied at the University, taking his degree in 1520. There he first came into contact with the teachings of Luther which he afterwards preached with constant fervour. But his impetuous spirit could not suffer him to rest in a foreign land, and in 1528 he was back among his own people in the county of West Lothian, preaching the new doctrines and winning converts among his friends and relatives. Summoned by Beaton to St. Andrews, he went calmly and confidently, he alone expecting the fate which was soon to follow. Questioned of his faith, he stood firm on doctrine, but matters of Church government and administration, he admitted to be disputable points. He was still at liberty when rumours came of a Hamilton force on the way to win his rescue.

Before his friends could arrive, he was suddenly arrested at his lodging in the town, on the evening of February 28, and on the following day brought to the stake. His death was long-drawn-out. The train of powder laid to the faggots did not light properly and there was delay while more faggots and more powder were brought. A wind from the North Sea and heavy showers prevented the flames from gathering force rapidly and for six hours the agony was prolonged, while some monks and notably a Black Friar, Alexander Campbell, who had been his chief accuser, urged the dying martyr to recant. He stood steadfast to the end.

His death was soon noted abroad and provoked severe comment. "Another who, we are told, was a 'merry gentleman', a 'familiar' of Archbishop James Beaton, John Lindsay by name, gave sound advice: 'My Lord,' he said, 'if you burn any more except ye follow my counsel, ye will utterly destroy yourselves. If ye will burn (underground) cellars, for the neck of Master Patrick Hamilton, infected as many as it blew upon.'"

BY KEVIN EASON, MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

However, Ian McAllister, chairman of Ford of Britain, has told his executives not to seek discounted sales at the expense of profit, allowing Vauxhall to move into the top slot in the sales league table. After sales were counted at

Ford blamed the recession and uncertainty over the Budget for its fall in sales. Vauxhall said that the February market was a clear indication that no single company would dominate. "No company can expect to take a third or a quarter of all new car sales. There will be a few big players but several companies, including the new Japanese companies in Britain, which will all have significant market shares."



On the ball: Paul Tsongas, Democratic presidential candidate, throwing a football into a crowd during a rally in Seattle. Democratic candidates are campaigning for next week's primaries in Maryland, Georgia, Colorado and Utah. Campaign trail, page 8

Mr Justice Tucker made clear yesterday that he believes in the need for a jury. He told David Calvert-Smith, one of the Nadir case prosecution team: "I feel no-one more suited to trying this than a British jury. This trial will start as soon as possible."

Mrs Mills again tackled the issue of fraud trials when she addressed a conference in Eastbourne yesterday. She said that to judge the fraud office by its conviction rate was a "very oversimplified way" to gauge its performance. She

She voiced regret that the fraud office was usually called in at too late a stage to recover much, if anything, for the victims of fraud. "It is far more satisfactory to try to deter and prevent fraud from occurring," she said.

The signatories are headed by Professor Martin H. ... president of the TV ... Down Association and ...

Miriam Rothschild, famous for work on insects, Fiona Reynolds, of the Council for the Protection of Rural England, and Andrew Lees and Jonathon Porritt, of Friends of the Earth.

Mr Gardiner recorded verdicts that all four died while on active service and engaged in combat. He told relatives: "There is a great deal that has not been said today, but all of it would reflect with the greatest credit on the deceased members of your families and their counterparts."

**♣ PARKER ♣
DUOFOLD**

A prize of a superb Parker Duofold international Fountain Pen, with an 18 karat gold nib and fully guaranteed for the lifetime of the original owner will be given for the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The winners and solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address

For the latest AA traffic and road works information, 24 hours a day, dial 0836 401 followed by the appropriate code.

**Sands, Park Street, Stow-on-the-Wold
Glos: J O Rimmer, Speed House**

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Information supplied by Mex Office

If you can solve this puzzle, you could be eligible to join Mensa. The High IQ Society. Cut out the coupon for further details and a copy of the self-administered test. To: MENSA, FREEPOST, WOLVERHAMPTON WV2 1BR. (No stamp required)

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THE TIMES BUSINESS

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 29 1992

BUSINESS EDITOR JOHN BELL

● BUSINESS NEWS 17-20, 29, 30
● WEEKEND MONEY 21-28
● SPORT 30-36

WEEKEND MONEY

Profile

Bernard Asher has stamped his personality on James Capel, the UK securities house, to good effect. After only a year as chairman, he has returned the company to profit — at a price. However, this logical, intellectual businessman and tough negotiator also has a warm heart and is very much a family man. **Page 19**



Returns fade

The banking ombudsman is investigating whether banks should offer customers with obsolete deposit accounts that they could get better interest rates from other accounts. **Page 24**

When to say no

Bank customers could find they have unwittingly given their consent to receiving mailshots, despite a provision in the new banking code that people have to give "express" consent. **Page 24**



Gold foil

Substantial bonuses are being paid in gold bars. Marks and Spencer vouchers and theatre tickets to employees, many at merchant banks, investment houses and securities houses. This way, employers avoid paying millions of pounds in National Insurance contributions. Employees can strike a deal with their employer to split the employer's tax saving in return for the inconvenience caused and the possible risk of the gold's value falling. **Page 21**



Boast enquiry

A scheme that boasts participants can earn £1,000 a week after two years for an outlay of only £20 a month is under investigation by the Advertising Standards Authority. **Page 26**



Sun rising

Sun Alliance is to increase home contents premiums by up to 35 per cent on April 1, after big increases in the costs and number of claims. Insurers are set to announce losses. **Page 26**

Fees cut

Murray Johnstone has cut initial charges on unit trusts to 1 per cent and other groups are expected to follow. The industry average initial charge is 5 to 6 per cent. **Page 22**

Offer recommended to shareholders

Lloyds returns with £93m bid for Macarthy

By Gillian Bowditch

LLOYDS Chemists made its much expected bid for Macarthy, its rival, yesterday, two days after it was cleared to do so by Peter Lilley, the trade secretary, acting on the advice of the monopolies commission.

Lloyds, which has the blessing of the Macarthy board, is bidding £93.6 million for the chain of 171 chemist stores, trading mainly as Savory & Moore, and the associated Macarthy businesses.

Lloyds' original bid of £83 million was referred to the monopolies commission last October along with a rival bid of £75 million from UniChem. At the time of the first bid, Lloyds received acceptances in respect of over 65 per cent.

Peter Dodd, UniChem's chairman, said his board had not decided whether to re-enter the fray with a counter bid. "We haven't seen the offer document from Lloyds yet and we will wait for that. Most of Macarthy's shares are held by institutions so there is no panic. If we did decide to bid again, I imagine we would do so within 15 or 16 days of seeing the offer document," he said.

Lloyds is offering one new ordinary share for every Macarthy share which will still qualify for the 5p dividend on April 6 if the bid is successful. The offer values each Mac-

arthy share at 337p and there is a cash alternative of 305p. Lloyds' merchant bank, Samuel Montagu, is offering the cash alternative separately. The brokers are Panmure Gordon and Coney NatWest Wood Mackenzie.

Lloyds' offer for the Macarthy 6 per cent preference share is 100p in cash, and for the 5.5 per cent preference share it is 110p in cash. The bid values Macarthy at 24.4 times last year's earnings. Macarthy shares fell 3p to 318p on the news yesterday and Lloyds fell 12p to 327p.

Lloyds already holds 9.9 per cent of Macarthy and has received an irrevocable undertaking to accept the offer from Covent Strategic Investment Trust, Macarthy's largest shareholder with 16.8 per cent. Lloyds, therefore, already speaks for 26.7 per cent of Macarthy.

Jan Parsons, Macarthy's chief executive, said the board had thought long and hard before recommending the Lloyds offer. "We think it is a good offer. We've obviously thought about the UniChem position but I am convinced that Lloyds together with opportunity."

Mr Parsons, who will receive £400,000 as severance pay under the terms of the bid, said other shareholders were already pledging their

support to Lloyds and he expected the bid to be over by the first closing date. "Clearly there has been a lot of uncertainty for the group and it will be a good thing for everyone if that is resolved quickly."

Lloyds' existing shareholders have been promised an interim dividend of 1.55p for the year to end-June 1992, an increase of 32 per cent over last year's interim. The new shares will not rank for this dividend.

In the six months to end-December 1991, Lloyds turnover rose 94 per cent to £218 million. On a like-for-like basis turnover at the chemist division was up 8.5 per cent. Like for like sales in the chemist division are currently up 10.1 per cent on last year.

Allen Lloyd, the group's chairman and chief executive, says the two businesses fit well together. Macarthy's chemist stores are mainly in London and the South-East, South Wales, central Scotland and Jersey where they trade as Savory & Moore. In the Isle of Man, they trade as G J Maley.



Chemical equation: Allen Lloyd believes Macarthy fits well with his own group

chemist stores. Lifecycle, Macarthy's health food business, will integrate into Lloyds' Holland & Barrett.

Mr Lloyd is confident that "important improvements in profitability" can be achieved in Savory & Moore in the short term, and that gross margins of the existing Lloyds group can be further improved as a result of the increase in purchasing power that would arise.

Times, page 20

Lloyd's 'whitewash' feared

By Jonathan Prynn

FURTHER questions have been raised by some ruined Lloyd's names about the independence of Sir David Walker, who has been appointed by the insurance market to head an enquiry into the wave of catastrophic losses.

Some names are unhappy that Sir David, the chairman of the Securities and Investments Board, is paid a £15,000 annual fee by Lloyd's for his work on its ruling council, though he does not personally benefit from the payments. One name said he feared that the enquiry into

the reinsurance "spiral" would be a whitewash. A spokesman for Lloyd's said the fee was paid to all eight outside, nominated members of the council. "In Sir David's case, all the money is paid directly to the SIB to offset against the time he spends here," he said. Sir David is thought to spend about one day a week on Lloyd's affairs.

Lloyd's appointed Sir David last week to head the investigation amid mounting public and political concern over the operations of certain

sections of the Lloyd's market, which have led to losses of up to £1 billion.

Lloyd's named the other four members of the enquiry team. They are: Sir William Clark, Conservative MP for Croydon South; John Lock, chairman of Mercantile & General, the insurance company, and a director of the Prudential; Peter Mynors, the senior partner of the insurance practice of Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte; and Leslie Lucas, chief executive of Norwich Winterthur Reinsurance.

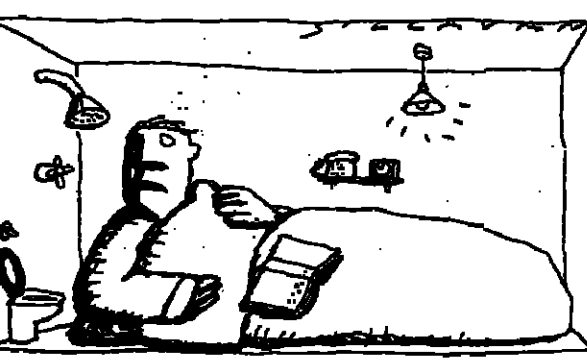
Travellers resist the hard cell

FROM SEAN MCCARTHAIGH IN PARIS

AN AIRLINE desk clerk explained it was a "real hard" sell. "You pick up the telephone and a voice says, 'Hi! This is the Hotel Cocoon. We still have room for any of your customers right now.'"

The callers are trying to convince weary air travellers to stumble into a tiny, air-conditioned cube in the departure lounge at Charles de Gaulle airport, rather than take the train into Paris and find a hotel. For just 250 francs, about £25, guests can stay up to 16 hours in a windowless box not quite three metres long, 2.4 metres in width and height. They share the space with a bed, an alarm clock, a telephone, a toilet and a shower.

The brains behind the new, Fr10 million project is Claude Douillard, the president of Elitair, France's third-largest hotel-restaurants group. He first saw Japanese men clambering into coffin-like capsules during a



trip to Tokyo in 1983 and vowed one day he would bring the idea home. Elitair carried out extensive market research and by 1989 they had built a prototype in the airport shopping area. Surveys showed 95 per cent of visitors agreeing to try the cabins, with 5 per cent refusing because there were no windows.

Two years later, Elitair negotiated with Aéroports de Paris for the use of an 800 square metre area in termi-

nal one, used by almost all airlines except Air France. "Well, some of our customers are French," says Edwige Wivioet, an Elitair director, "but most are Japanese or from the United States."

Staff have also registered a significant number of English business people willing to give the novel accommodation a go. Brochures for the Hotel Cocoon gleefully predict increased flight delays and offer the stranded executive the use of a tri-

P&D boosts Swiss parent

By Our Financial Editor

A MUCH improved performance from Phillips & Drew, its main securities offshore, and a widening of interest margins helped Union Bank of Switzerland increase group net profit by 36 per cent to SwFr1.22 billion (£470 million) in 1991.

Gross interest income edged up by only 2 per cent to SwFr12 billion, but net interest income grew 23 per cent to SwFr 3.3 billion. This was partly due to refinancing of liabilities at lower dollar interest rates. Income from securities business, much of which is now conducted through UBS Phillips & Drew, more than doubled from £315 million to £692 million, helped by upturns in securities markets.

Return on shareholders' equity rose from 5.4 per cent to 7 per cent, despite a 13 per cent increase in expenses. UBS is not increasing its dividend but plans to distribute share warrants worth about 18 per cent of its dividend. The group also plans a five-for-one share split for both its bearer and registered stock.

The results contrast strong-

ly with most British international banks, but UBS was not immune to problems associated with recession.

Group charges for depreciation, losses and provisions rose by 30 per cent to SwFr1.7 billion. UBS says that "the predominant part

consisted of provisions for the sharp increase in doubtful debts resulting from the worldwide economic slowdown". Of the SwFr1.2 billion charges within the parent company, "a considerable share" was for doubtful debts in Switzerland.

UBS has won the go-ahead to start building what should by 1996 be the world's largest port for handling liquefied natural gas exports in the Gulf emirate of Qatar.

SACE, Italy's export credit guarantee agency, granted cover worth 500 billion lire for the port to be built by Societa Italiana per Condotta d'Acqua, part of IRI, the state holding group.

The total contract is worth 922 billion lire.

Mystery clouds ownership of Italian bank

FROM REUTER IN MILAN

AN ALMOST farcical dispute over who owns Italy's second-largest private bank has become what the press calls a "giallo finanziario" — a financial thriller.

Widespread confusion has reigned since Giuseppe Gennari, the Italian financier, told Italian reporters on Tuesday that he had agreed to pay 1,200 billion lire (£555 million) for a 52 per cent stake in the parent company of Banca Nazionale dell'Agricoltura (BNA).

Signor Gennari said he bought the shares in Bonifiche Siele Finanziaria from Count Giovanni Auletta Armentis, BNA's chairman. But the count, who has strong links with the Christian Democrat party, has denied selling the shares.

"It's a Kafkaesque affair," said Vincenzo Mamurri, a member of Consob, the Italian bourse regulatory commission, which has suspended trading in both groups until the matter is clarified.

"We don't know who to believe," Gennari says one thing and Auletta says the opposite," Signor Mamurri said.

To complicate matters, Bank of Italy officials have said they were not informed

of the alleged sale. Under Italian law, the central bank must be consulted regarding the purchase of large stakes in banks and bank holding companies.

The Bank of Italy urged BNA last year to strengthen its capitalisation, and the bank has held periodic negotiations with several banks about a possible link-up. One of these is state-owned Credit Italiano, which owns 22 per cent of Bonifiche Siele and 8.5 per cent of BNA.

"We weren't informed," said Pier Carlo Marengo, Credit's managing director. Signor Gennari said he wanted to create a new, strong banking group to finance agrarian services, particularly after Federconsorzi, the farm co-operative, collapsed last year.

"It is a comedy," said Giorgio Cigliana, one of three court-appointed administrators for Federconsorzi, which owns about 14 per cent of BNA. "The problem is whether there is a contract or not," he said.

A spokesman for Signor Gennari reiterated that the businessman had made a deal to buy effective control of BNA. "A sale contract signed by Auletta exists," the spokesman added.

Italian firms have won the go-ahead to start building what should by 1996 be the world's largest port for handling liquefied natural gas exports in the Gulf emirate of Qatar.

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The total contract is worth 922 billion lire.

PROGRESSIVE PEP

Many investors would be well-advised to take maximum advantage of the tax benefits currently offered by Personal Equity Plans while they still can.

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The value of investments may go down as well as up and you may not get back the amount you invest.

THE POUND

US dollar
1.7580 (+0.0005)
German mark
2.8778 (-0.0089)
Exchange index
90.7 (-0.1)

Bank of England official
close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share
1983.0 (-3.7)
FT-SE 100
2562.1 (+0.1)
New York Dow Jones
3285.33 (+15.89)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave
21338.81 (+5.11)

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base: 10 1/2%
3-month interbank 10 1/2-10 3/4%
3-month deposit bills 9 3/4-9 1/2%
US: Prime Rate 6 1/2%
Federal Funds 4%
3-month Treasury Bills 3.53-3.91%
30-year bonds 102-102 1/2

CURRENCIES

London: New York
£ \$1.7580
£ DM1.8731
£ Sfr1.26075
£ FF6.7749
£ Yen126.54
£ Index 90.7
ECU 10.709410
£ SDR1.274168

GOLD

London: Fixing:
AM \$263.05 pm \$263.10
3-month deposit bills 9 3/4-9 1/2%
201 30
New York:
Comex \$263.95-254.45

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Mar) \$17.55 bid (\$17.65)

RETAIL PRICES

RPI: 135.6 January (1987=100)
* Denotes midday trading prices

1X

BICC to buy in Germany

BICC, the electrical cables and construction group, will buy KWO, a leading eastern German cables business, for £23 million.

The group said it had agreed the purchase with the Treuhandanstalt, the government agency responsible for the privatisation of former East German state-owned companies. KWO comprises four Berlin companies and manufactures a power cables and metallic and optical telephone cables.

BICC will be committing itself to an investment programme of at least DM80 million, spent over the next two years. Given the opportunities for sales growth in Germany and planned efficiencies, the acquisition was expected to have a neutral effect on BICC's 1992 earnings, the group said.

Final passed

Stainless Metallcraft, the medical and engineering group which is quoted on the USM, has passed its final dividend (1p) as pre-tax losses deepened to £256,000 (£141,000) in the year ended August. Earlier, there was again no interim dividend. The loss per share increased to 3.3p (2.2p).

Craton deficit

LOSSES have increased at Craton Lodge & Knight, the holding company for design, communications and new product consultancies. In the year to end-December the pre-tax deficit rose to £431,000 (£235,000). There is no final dividend. The group proposes a name change to Princesdale Group.

Essex interim

Essex Furniture, the USM-quoted upholstery, furniture maker and retailer, is raising its interim 25 pence to 1.25p per share, after lifting pre-tax profits 17.2 per cent to £375,000 in the six months to end-December. Earnings per share are 2.63p (2.32p).

SEET losses

SEET, formerly Scottish, English and European Textiles, the loss-making Harris tweed maker, has trimmed pre-tax losses from £637,000 to £455,000 in the six months to end-October. The deficit per share is 10.5p (16.3p). Again, there is no interim.

Fleming value

Net asset value at Fleming Emerging Markets Investment after its first six months is 100.4p share. Pre-tax profits for the half year to end-December were £734,691. There is no interim dividend.

Orders plunge

West German engineering orders plunged a real 9 per cent in January compared with the same month in 1991, the engineering industry association, VDMA, said.

Gt Portland Estates loses £14m in disposal

By JONATHAN PRYNN

GREAT Portland Estates, the property group, is selling at a loss of £14 million its 50 per cent interest in Bride Hall, a property developer and trader in the office, retail and business park sector.

The Bride Hall holding was acquired in 1987 as a joint venture with Danny Desmond, who resigned as a director of Great Portland Estates earlier this week. The stake is being sold to a trust, in which Mr Desmond has an interest, for a minimum of £500,000. Great Portland said it was selling because there was "unlikely to be a significant upturn in the foreseeable future" in Bride Hall's markets.

The Bride Hall investment was valued in Great Portland's books at £15 million. The £14 million loss on the disposal will be treated as an extraordinary item because Great Portland is withdrawing from the business property market.

In a simultaneous deal, Great Portland announced that it is to acquire from Bride Hall Developments, a subsidiary of Bride Hall, a development in Euston Road, London, that has been pre-let to Gestetner Holdings. The purchase price is £29 million. Great Portland provided a guarantee for the bank facility to finance the acquisition and redevelopment of the property.

The company said it had decided that "as any future fall in value could result in a loss to the group under the guarantee, it is in the best interests of the group to purchase the property as an investment".

The loss on the property at June 1991 was estimated to be £0.7 million, which will be charged to trading profits for the current year. The fall in value of the completed development since then is estimated at £8 million, which will be taken into the group's revaluation reserve. Richard Peskin, Great Portland's chairman and managing director, said the property was being bought because "it is sensible for us to take a long-term position rather than a short-term loss".

Great Portland also announced yesterday that it is raising £30 million through a further issue of mortgage debt stock 2021. The yield is 120 basis points over the reference gilt.

The company said the funds raised would be used to finance "further property investment, development and refurbishment". Great Portland is being advised by Baring Brothers and the broker for the issue is Cazenove. The company launched a £100 million issue in October.

The company added that central London rental values had continued to decline since October 29, when a valuation was carried out by Hillier Parker. The company gave a warning that the decline is likely to affect property values. The next valuation of the company's properties is due on March 31.

Mr Peskin confirmed that the final dividend for the year ending March 31 would be maintained at last year's level of 6.6p. The interim was held at 3.4p.

Rawlins slates soft deals

By OUR CITY STAFF

PETER Rawlins, chief executive of the London Stock Exchange, has called for the ending of so-called "soft commissions", which have raised concern among City regulators.

"I believe our community should, unprompted, discontinue this practice," he told the National Association of Pension Funds conference in Eastbourne.

"To the average man, if people want a service they should be prepared to pay visibly for it. Why do we need some indirect form of remuneration unintelligible to the outsider?" asked Mr Rawlins.

Soft commission refers to the practice whereby stockbrokers provide research, screen information and other services to institutional investors in return for guaranteed orders.

The Securities and Investments Board has started a consultation exercise in response to growing unease.

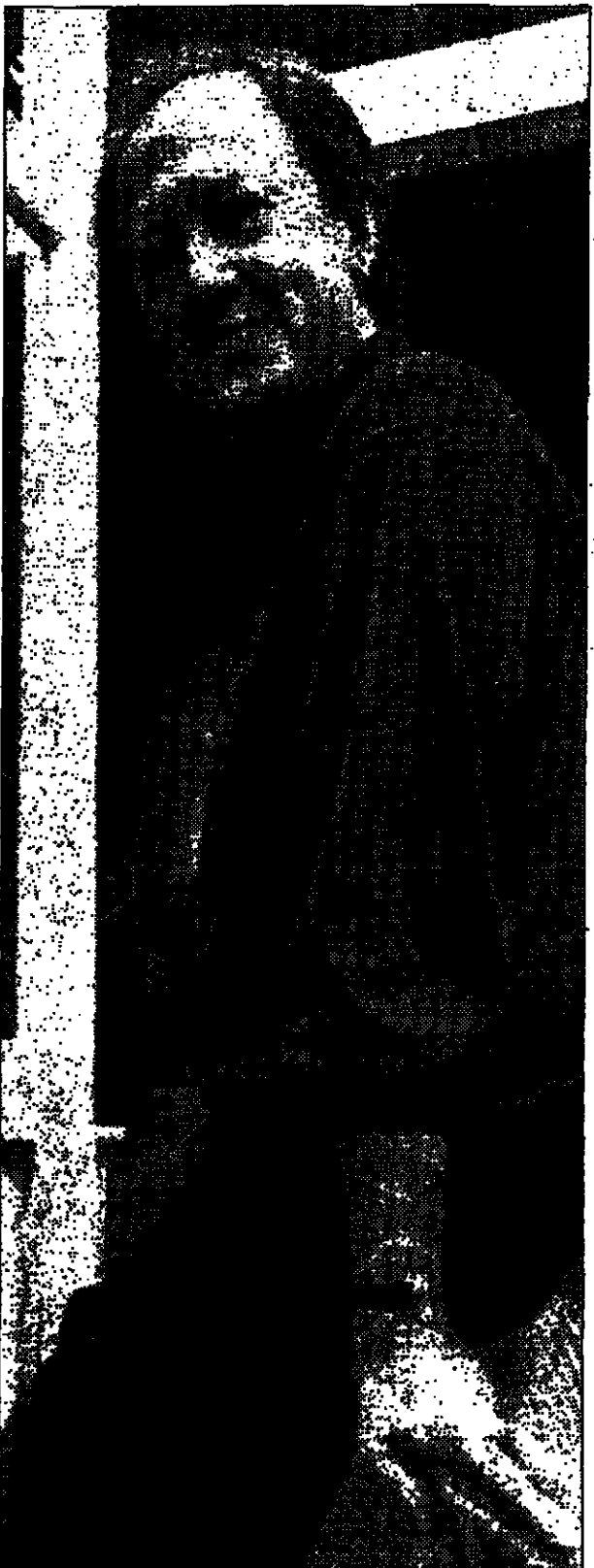
There are worries that the fast-growing use of soft commission arrangements provides ways for brokers to provide inducements to fund managers, that they could lead to overcharging of institutions, and that fund managers may not seek best terms for clients if they have soft commission arrangements with a particular broker.

Mr Rawlins, in the most outspoken official criticism of the practice to date, said regulators might introduce something that he called a "smell test".

"When we look at the myriad little practices which go on in the depths of our industry, we should constantly ask ourselves, 'How does this smell to the outsider?'"

Mr Rawlins said the most serious threat to the securities industry could be a self-generated one, the willingness of the whole financial services industry to be overtaken by its own comfortable and arcane traditions.

"If practitioner-based self-regulation dies, it will not be because of its own inefficiency but because of a perception that the practitioner-regulators are tied up in their own vested interests," he said.



"Vested interests": Peter Rawlins, Exchange chief

Forth Ports sale approaches

By MARTIN WALLER

THE government will next week start marketing the last privatisation before the general election, a £35 million float for the Forth Ports Authority in the Edinburgh area.

Forth's main assets are the ports of Leith and Grangemouth, and other smaller facilities in the area. Main customers are BP, which owns the refinery at Grangemouth, Shell and British Gas.

Publication of the pathfinder prospectus is set for Monday. Forth is thought to have considered a management buyout or a trade sale

but concluded that the need to keep the company in a financial state to grow further suggested a market flotation as the most obvious route.

Forth, like other ports, has only come into its own since the 1984 abolition of the National Docks Labour Scheme. City estimates suggest 1990 was a record year, with pre-tax profits as high as £10 million, but the prospectus is likely to include a warning that the recession has hit 1991 earnings, which are thought to be a little lower.

Over the past ten days City investors have been taken to Edinburgh to inspect the ports. The full details of the pricing will be safely completed before the Budget.

Forth owns a total 430 hectares of land and 240 hectares of water. The flotation will contain a property clawback provision limiting any windfall gains possible once the property market improves.

The pricing will be based on the present value of the biggest ports privatisation so far, of Associated British Ports, and the trade sales of Felixstowe and Tees and Hartlepool.

Arcadian losses cut to £592,000 at half time

By OUR CITY STAFF

ARCADIAN International, a leisure property group run by the former management of Parkdale Holdings and chaired by Sir Peter Parker, ex-head of British Rail, trimmed pre-tax losses from £2.29 million to £592,000 in the six months to October 31.

There is again no ordinary dividend. Most of the improvement is explained by the fact that the figures last time contained £1.48 million of exceptional items; the operating loss increased by £44,000 to £552,000. Robert Breare,

chief executive, promised a "satisfactory operating result" by the year end if funding on a hotel at Paris's Charles de Gaulle airport and a hotel and golf course near Euro Disneyland is in place this year.

The Parkdale team acquired Westminster & Country Properties in 1990 with a view to selling its commercial property portfolio and using the company — renamed Arcadian — as a vehicle to develop leisure schemes in Britain and on the Continent.

Bunzl disposes of US and Swiss operations

BUNZL, the paper group whose former chairman and chief executive, James White, was ousted by shareholders 15 months ago, is selling its 51 per cent interest in the group's American and Swiss paper and pulp trading operations.

The group says the disposal is in line with its strategy of disposing of low-margin trading businesses. The companies sold are Intercontinental Cellulose Sales, of New York, and Intercontinental Cellulose Sales, of Switzerland.

The purchaser is George Edwards, the ICS president and minority shareholder. The combined business had sales of \$186 million last year and made a pre-tax loss of \$888,000 on net assets of \$5.4 million. The disposal follows the sale of Bunzl's loss-making west coast food distribution centres in America last month. Bunzl has agreed with the purchaser not to disclose the price received, but it is not thought to be more than the net asset value.

Bass sells 56 pubs

BASS has sold a further 56 public houses to Century Inns for an undisclosed sum estimated by analysts at just over £10 million. The sale increases Century's estate to 241 pubs. Last November, Century, which is based in Billingham, Cleveland, bought 185 pubs from Bass. The latest batch of pubs is located between Northumbria and Lincolnshire, with a concentration in Hull, Huddersfield and Gateshead. Bass Taverns has sold or contracted to sell more than 1,900 pubs since July 1989 to meet trade department requirements drawn up after a monopolies commission report on the brewing industry. Bass shares rose 9p to 577p.

Lionheart stake lifted

NEWELL, an American hardware and housewares group, has increased its stake in Lionheart, which is in similar businesses in Britain, to 13.5 per cent by acquiring 17 million shares from HIT Investments, part of Hillsdown Holdings. No price was disclosed but the shares — 8.7 per cent of Lionheart's equity — are worth more than £6 million in the market. Newell has a five-year agreement with Lionheart not to increase its holding to more than a fifth without the board's consent. "They understand our business and their backing will help us take the group forward," said Paul Lever, Lionheart's executive chairman.

Cluff meets forecast

CLUFF Resources, the oil and gold-mining company with interests in Ghana, suffered a small fall in pre-tax profits to £2.35 million in the year to end-December, against £2.51 million last time. However, profits were in line with the forecast made at the time of the recent 11-for-20 rights issue at 34p per share, which was made to raise £3.2 million towards developing the Ayanfuri open pit gold mine in Ghana. Earnings per share slipped from 2.43p to 1.65p. An unchanged first and final dividend of 1p is proposed. Revenue declined from £16.7 million to £14.7 million. The shares eased 1p to 23p.

GM invests in Poland

POLAND and General Motors, the American carmaker, agreed to begin long-term co-operation to assemble Opel cars in Warsaw next year in a joint venture with FSO, the state-owned car plant. A memorandum of understanding was signed by General Motors-Europe, FSO and the ministries of industry, privatisation and finance. FSO — the initials mean Passenger Car Factory — has been looking for a new foreign partner for four years, and the deal, in which the two groups will invest a total of \$75 million in a new company, is considered a highly symbolic achievement for Poland in attracting western investment.

CapCo profits drop

CAPITAL & Counties, the property group best known for retail developments such as the Lakeside shopping centre at Thurrock, in Essex, saw pre-tax profits fall by £24 million to £29 million in the year to the end of December. The fall followed a turnaround in interest charges from a receipt of £8.2 million last time to a payment of £21.2 million, including an additional £15 million after the company stopped capitalising interest at Lakeside. As forecast at the time of the rights issue last year, a final dividend of 5p makes a total down from 13.2p to 10p. *Tempsas, page 20*

Abby Nat	1,600	Courtauld	334	MEPC	519	Sainsbury	1,800
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200

New York (midday)	285.33 (+15.88)	General	5888.91 (+20.80)
Dow Jones	285.33 (+15.88)	Paris CAC	526.54 (+2.22)
S&P Composite	415.54 (+1.68)	Zurich SKA Gen	482.7 (-1.0)
Telco	2133.81 (+5.11)	London:	
Hong Kong	4929.08 (+33.93)	FT All-Share	1229.84 (+0.46)
Hang Seng	4929.08 (+33.93)	FT 500	1387.97 (+0.63)
FTSE Euro 100	1169.95 (+2.69)	FT Gold Mines	130.2 (+3.0)
Asiatic	126.6 (same)	FT Fixed Interest	101.38 (+0.11)
CBS Tenancy	1614.2 (-9.0)	FT Govt Secs	88.35 (+0.20)
Sydney	1745.13 (-4.77)	Bargains	324.19
Frankfurt DAX	1745.13 (-4.77)	SEAQ Volume	449.79
First Dealings		USM (Danstrum)	140.88 (+0.12)
Last Dealings			
Refinery 17			
Call options were taken out on 28/02: Albert Fisher, Bedford St, Connaught Square, West, Oyster House, Alberts, P.O. Box, Tarnice.			
Call options were taken out on 28/02: Albert Fisher, Bedford St, Connaught Square, West, Oyster House, Alberts, P.O. Box, Tarnice.			

Period	Open	High	Low	Close	Volume
Mar 92	2597.0	2597.0	2597.0	2597.0	4997
Jun 92	2607.0	2607.0	2607.0	2607.0	1369
Three Month Sterling	89.55	89.55	89.55	89.55	20487
Previous open interest	21769				9569
Mar 92	90.17	90.17	90.17	90.17	1174
Jun 92	90.48	90.48	90.48	90.48	981
Three Mth Eurodollar	90.48	90.48	90.48	90.48	981
Previous open interest	25463				29477
Mar 92	90.41	90.41	90.41	90.41	6755
Jun 92	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	29477
Three Mth Euro DM	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	29477
Previous open interest	3219				1025
Mar 92	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	1025
Jun 92	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	1025
Three Mth ECU	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	1025
Previous open interest	8889				653
Mar 92	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	653
Jun 92	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	653
Three month ECU	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	653
Previous open interest	3386				3539
Mar 92	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	3539
Jun 92	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	3539
Three month ECU	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	3539
Previous open interest	24481				5031

Exchange index compared with 1985 was down at 90.7 (day's range 90.7-90.9)					
Mar 92	90.7	90.7	90.7	90.7	90.7
Jun 92	90.7	90.7	90.7	90.7	90.7
Three Month Sterling	89.55	89.55	89.55	89.55	89.55
Previous open interest	21769				9569
Mar 92	90.17	90.17	90.17	90.17	1174
Jun 92	90.48	90.48	90.48	90.48	981
Three Mth Eurodollar	90.48	90.48	90.48	90.48	981
Previous open interest	25463				29477
Mar 92	90.41	90.41	90.41	90.41	6755
Jun 92	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	29477
Three Mth Euro DM	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	29477
Previous open interest	3219				1025
Mar 92	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	1025
Jun 92	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	1025
Three Mth ECU	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	1025
Previous open interest	8889				653
Mar 92	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	653
Jun 92	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	653
Three month ECU	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	653
Previous open interest	3386				3539
Mar 92	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	3539
Jun 92	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	3539
Three month ECU	90.40	90.40	90.40	90.40	3539
Previous open interest	24481				5031

Abby Nat	1,600	Courtauld	334	MEPC	519	Sainsbury	1,800
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200
Abdy Nat	1,600	Emmott	465	Middle Spk	2,500	Scott & Son	2,200

New York (midday)	285.33 (+15.88)	General	5888.91 (+20.80)
Dow Jones	285.33 (+15.88)	Paris CAC	526.54 (+2.22)
S&P Composite	415.54 (+1.68)	Zurich SKA Gen	482.7 (-1.0)
Telco	2133.81 (+5.11)	London:	
Hong Kong	4929.08 (+33.93)	FT All-Share	1229.84 (+0.46)
Hang Seng	4929.08 (+33.93)	FT 500	1387.97 (+0.63)
FTSE Euro 100	1169.95 (+2.69)	FT Gold Mines	130.2 (+3.0)
Asiatic	126.6 (same)	FT Fixed Interest	101.38 (+0.11)
CBS Tenancy	1614.2 (-9.0)	FT Govt Secs	88.35 (+0.20)
Sydney	1745.13 (-4.77)	Bargains	324.19
Frankfurt DAX	1745.13 (-4.77)	SEAQ Volume	449.79
First Dealings		USM (Danstrum)	140.88 (+0.12)
Last Dealings			
Refinery 17			
Call options were taken out on 28/02: Albert Fisher, Bedford St, Connaught Square, West, Oyster House, Alberts, P.O. Box, Tarnice.			
Call options were taken out on 28/02: Albert Fisher, Bedford St, Connaught Square, West, Oyster House, Alberts, P.O. Box, Tarnice.			

<p>quiet by late afternoon switched to the expiry Robusta coffee futures determined by cross-trading ing-liquidation in thin.</p>				
<p>GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES</p>				
<p>WHEAT (cable 40)</p>				
Mar	125.30			
May	126.80			
Jul	128.30			
Jun	127.15			
Nov	115.45			
Nov	115.45			
<p>Volume: 157</p>				
<p>BARLEY (cable 40)</p>				
Mar	115.80			
May	116.30			
Sep	108.25			
Nov	112.15			
Jan	115.75			
<p>Volume: 10</p>				
<p>SI-PRO SOYA (cable 40)</p>				
Apr	127.00			
Jun	127.50			
Aug	123.50			
Oct	123.50			
Dec	120.30			
<p>Volume: 225</p>				
<p>POTATO</p>				
6/8	Open	Close		
Mar	109.5	108.5		
Apr	109.9	122.1		
May	140.0	146.0		
<p>Volume: 410</p>				
<p>RUBBER</p>				
<p>No 1 RSS (C) 60/90</p>				
Mar	52.50-52.00			

<p>LONDON OIL REPORTS (ICIS-LOR)</p>				
<p>London 6.00pm: For no apparent reason, the market showed some optimism for sending tank prices ended the week little changed.</p>				
<p>CRUDE OILS (\$/barrel FOB)</p>				
Brent Physical	17.45	-0.10		
Brent 15 day (Mar)	17.25	-0.05		
Brent 15 day (Apr)	17.50	-0.10		
W Tense Intermediates (Apr)	18.65	-0.05		
W Tense Intermediates (Mar)	18.80	-0.05		
<p>PRODUCTS (\$/MT)</p>				
<p>Spot CIF NW Europe (garment delivery)</p>				
Premium Gas 1.5	Bid: 197 (vols)	Offer: 200 (vols)		
Genoil SEC	199.25-99.50	Feb	162.00-62.75	
NOE EHC 18 Mar	140 (-1)		161 (-1)	
NOE EHC 18 Apr	141 (-1)		161 (-1)	
5.5 Fuel Oil	141 (-1)		68 (vols)	
Naphtha	179 (-1)		180 (-1)	
<p>PIPE FUTURES</p>				
<p>IGL Ltd</p>				
<p>GAS OIL</p>				
Mar	159.50-59.75	Jun	160.25-61.00	
Apr	159.25-59.50	Jul	162.00-62.75	
May	159.25-59.50	Aug	165.00-65.25	
<p>Vol: 8400</p>				
<p>BRISTOL (6.00pm)</p>				
Apr	17.51-17.52	Jul	17.57-17.59	
Jun	17.52	Aug	17.59	
Jun	17.57-17.59	Aug	Vol: 10006	
<p>UNLEADED GASOLINE</p>				
Mar	200.07-09.00	Jul	205.80	BD
Jun	201.12	Aug	205.80	BD
Jul	203.00-09.00	Aug	205.80	BD
<p>RUWEK</p>				
<p>CNU Ltd (\$/MT/pt)</p>				
Feb 92	High: 120	Low: 120	Close: 1229	
Mar 92	1265	1250	1222	
Apr 92	1310	1295	1296	
Jul	1120	1120	1120	
<p>Mar 181 lots. Open first at 2716. Index: 1222 - 6</p>				

<p>LONDON MINERAL EXCHANGE</p>					
Contract	1301.0-1302.5	3mths	1300.0-1309.0	Mar	671.00
	281.50-290.75		302.00-302.50		85375
	130.00-130.50		130.00-130.50		400000
	300.00-300.50		300.00-300.50		25000
	1299.0-1299.5		1323.0-1324.0		26000
	7760.0-7765.0		7830.0-7835.0		50000

<p>OFFICIALS (Volume per day)</p>				
Copper (Gd) A (\$/ton)				
Lead (\$/ton)				
Sp. Zinc (\$/ton)				
Sp. Zinc (\$/ton)				
Ti (\$/ton)				
Aluminium 41 Gd (\$/ton)				
Nickel (\$/ton)				

BUSINESS PROFILE: Bernard Asher

Logical intellectual makes his mark

The chairman of James Capel tells Carol Leonard of the price that has had to be paid for a return to profit

Bernard Asher, chairman of James Capel, the UK securities house, is living proof of the school of thought that claims the personality of the person heading a company determines the culture within that organisation.

Asher, aged 55, who returned to London from Hong Kong in January 1991, specifically to resolve James Capel's problems — the company had lost £31 million in 1990 — has more than made his mark.

On March 11, James Capel and its parent, the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, where Asher is also a director, will announce they are again in profit. Given the present economic climate, that is no mean feat.

Asher says: "James Capel had hit a rather sticky financial patch and in the Hongkong Bank we take these things very seriously. It started to go wrong in 1988 when, after the dramatic growth of the market, with even more acceleration in the rise of costs, the boom came to an end. Capel's was caught between a levelling out of revenues and a continued acceleration of expenditure. It was more exposed than most other houses and mistakes were made." Asher claims the firm is now "coming right" but admits it has not been achieved without pain. He "got rid of" 300 people, 12 per cent of the James Capel payroll, and withdrew from many activities. "We have withdrawn from money broking, from petroleum information services and from a variety of smaller activities we shouldn't have been in," he says. "We have brought our costs under control and taken ourselves out of a number of joint ventures. It helps management concentrate on the really big issues rather than concern themselves with a lot of smaller matters, which can be disproportionately time consuming."

Asher's management style is wholly logical. He has no ego problem and although he is adept at politics, he has not become hooked on power. He does not

normally court personal publicity, his feet remain steadfastly on the ground, and he will always allow logic to override emotion. So much so that the unpleasant task of having to rid the firm of such a large number of employees did not cause him undue concern.

"It's a thing you have to do, it's not personal," he says. "You must have compassion and, therefore, you must consider the policies you adopt in terms of outplacement, but at the end of the day it's shareholders' money, not mine. Sometimes it is crueler to be kind. To fudge issues, not to close down a department, not to get rid of somebody, lulls them into a false sense of security. You must be realistic. This is not the church and so people know that things don't stand still."

Asher foresees no more redundancies in Britain. "You can only do that once, to do it twice is a mark of poor management because you should have had more foresight." He denies that James Capel has ever been put up for sale.

"The Hongkong Bank isn't in the business of buying and selling businesses" — but admits that he has now turned his attentions to the firm's Far Eastern operations. The axe is still poised and sharp. Nobody, however, could accuse Asher of wielding it from afar. He is hands-on, visible, and operates an open-door policy to the end. That also means he is fully aware of the trauma redundancies can cause.

"One of the house rules here is that anybody who wanted to see me in their period of redundancy was able to do so," he says. "They can say some pretty hurtful and tart things to you." He glosses over the details. He has a habit of glossing over anything he regards as unimportant or that he would rather not discuss — his political skills in action.

Those left behind do not harbour hurtful or tart thoughts. Asher is not the type of operator to salvage the bottom line on the balance sheet at the expense of personal relationships. He is aware of the importance of team



Product of a whirlwind romance: Bernard Asher and his Russian wife, Batia, form the hub of a close family

spirit, of the need to make people feel secure and indispensable. Many of his underlings will readily admit that his presence made them nervous when he first arrived. He was seen as Hongkong Bank's hatchet man. Some employees resented his decision to ban chauffeur-driven cars, others felt unhappy at not having a boss steeped in the culture of the firm. They muttered about his thick spectacles, joked that they made it impossible for him to see where he was going, and complained that he knew nothing about stockbroking. They were quick to pick up on his occasional *faux pas* in the dealing room. Asher, in more ways than one, was a break with tradition.

However, he was also in possession of an exceptionally good brain and a sharp wit. He learns fast. He never made the same *faux pas* twice. Some more junior employees still complain that they do not know him as well as they knew his forerunners, but that is hardly surprising, given that most of them had been with the firm for more than 20 years before reaching the top. Whether begrudgingly

or not, most now acknowledge his professional ability. He has earned their respect in a surprisingly short time. He is a demanding boss, a tough negotiator and, in a business environment, can occasionally appear distant and austere. But he is also increasingly popular as a manager and morale is running high. Some of his more senior colleagues are even tipping him for the top job at Hongkong Bank.

One says: "Six or seven years ago, he was regarded as just a good, solid board director. Then he became a trouble-shooter, sorted out Wardley's [the merchant bank of which he is also chairman] and now he has sorted out James Capel as well. That has to make him a potential candidate."

In the midst of Capel's redundancy programme it might have seemed otherwise — his eyes harden and his voice becomes colder and more purposeful at the very mention of redundancy — but Asher, for all his logic, does have a heart. He is a warm human being, a close family man who will sometimes talk twice a day on the telephone to each of his three children, two of whom work in

New York. "We treat the telephone far too casually in order to speak to them, to stay in touch. They are terribly important to me."

He married his Russian wife, Batia, who was studying textile design at the Central School of Arts and Crafts, after a whirlwind romance lasting five months. That is not the act of a cold or dispassionate man. He enjoys the company of strong, intelligent women, admits that he much prefers working with women — "They have much less side and you don't have to worry about their egos" — and he is one of the few *Business Profile* interviewees to have cited a woman, other than his wife, as his best friend. Yet he is not one of the names ever mentioned when people gossip about extra-marital affairs. He is a strong and committed male.

That best friend, Yvonne Sarch, a headhunter and the wife of Sir Geoffrey Finsberg, the MP and leader of the British delegation to the Western European Union, says: "Women are very task oriented and so is Bernard. He is that rare breed, an intellectual businessman. He has wonderful con-

versation, is good company and has good social skills, but he is no joke to work with. He gives everybody time and space, but he also gives you sufficient rope to hang yourself. He will pick up on anything that you might have dropped. You have to perform. He is not a shouter or a yeller. I have never seen him lose his temper, he would use words instead. It means that you rise to his level of expectation. He is a nurturer." A nurturer in a paternal, almost professorial way.

Academia is a world in which Asher feels very much at home. A graduate of the London School of Economics — he got a 2:1 in the company of lecturers, professors and students. He was less enthusiastic about his first job, as a graduate trainee with S Japhet, the merchant bank. "I did about a year there and didn't enjoy it at all. It was a pen-pushing age, fearfully tedious. There were no computers, you had to spend hours reckoning columns of figures." He was saved by an invitation from his LSE professor to become a research assistant for the Royal Commis-

sion on Banking. He became research for the leaders of the National Union of Mineworkers and the TUC. "It was a period when the government was pumping huge sums into the nationalised industries and you had this feeling of being at the centre of things. Anything in Whitehall gives you that headiness, however frustrating the job."

As for his political leaning, Asher dismisses being a market economist as a professional training. As a student, he campaigned for the Liberal party in a Greater London Council election he once voted, by accident, for the Communist party. He has been known to vote Labour, but he believes he will probably vote Conservative at the next general election.

He is benevolent attitude towards society has been nurtured despite a prosperous upbringing. Born in Highgate, raised in East Anglia, he was the youngest of eight children. His mother died when he was four, his father looked after a variety of business investments, derived from inherited money, which stemmed from a shoe manufacturing business. He also collected cars. Asher, perhaps as a consequence, has a total disinterest in vehicles, and insists that he can distinguish neither makes nor colours. He lives in an expensive residential square in Knightsbridge — "I like to call it Hyde Park Corner, it sounds less upmarket" — but he is not overly materialistic. His gold watch is fastened with a fabric strap.

As he speaks, although he is not used to giving interviews, Asher sits back in his chair. He is relaxed. He behaves as if he has all the time in the world, even though one look at his daily schedule tells you otherwise.

He is slightly overweight, of medium height and impeccably dressed. It is instantly apparent that he enjoys conversation and that he listens exceptionally well. He reads voraciously, with three or four books on the go at one time, and that, too, shows. His conversation is littered with references to novels, historical reference books and musical works. He admits that if he could have chosen any other career, it would have been as an historian. "An economic historian, of course," he says. Is that a career he might one day pursue, tucked away in a country cottage? He laughs scornfully. "No, I don't see myself tucked away in a cottage," he says. "The reading room at the British Museum would be more to my taste, with a tremendous supply of books."

WEEK ENDING Matthew Bond

Slipping a muzzle on those barking bankers

JOHN Major and his advisers have made the restoration of the public's faith in the financial services industry a top priority in the run-up to the general election.

The prime minister believes the electorate — sorry, public — is sick of the scenes of financial mayhem that have become virtually a daily occurrence. If it's not Blue Arrow or Barlow Clowes, then it's the latest set of results from the high street banks and insurance companies. Mr Major has decided that enough is enough.

So, together with the powers that be at the Bank of England, the government is this weekend drafting emergency legislation to be laid before parliament as soon as possible. With Mr Major confident that he has finally come up with a sure-fire vote winner, the measures are expected to be announced in the Chancellor's forthcoming Budget speech.

Experts who have seen early drafts of the Dangerous Bankers Bill say it contains some of the most Draconian measures the financial services industry has ever devised. But the prime minister is determined to stamp out weeks in which the high street banks announce bad debt provisions of £5.6 billion and plans to make a further £2,000 or so voters sorry, staff — redundant this year.

The first hints of the bill's measures were contained in a speech made by Eddie George, the deputy governor of the Bank of England, who indicated that the banks' collective problems could have been avoided. "If we had been successful in keeping animal spirits on a shorter leash, the subsequent economic and social trauma would have been less."

But Mr Major, mindful of the electoral trauma that could follow, believes short-leashes are simply not enough to curb the Rottweiler lending instincts of Britain's banks. He wants the Dangerous Bankers Bill to require the more ferocious breeds of



banker to be muzzled. Singled out for particularly tough action are members of corporate lending departments, whose willingness to lend tens of millions of pounds to anyone with a sharp suit and a silver tongue means they have now taken over from their colleagues in Third World Lending as the Dogs Argentinos of banking. This most dangerous of specially trained lending animals will have to be muzzled at most times, but particularly while on golf courses, in three-star restaurants and on improbably expensive summer holidays.

The bill has a rather different set of controls in mind for the corporate financier, superficially a rather more civilised breed, but in reality a highly strung animal prone to occasional bouts of astonishing financial savagery. The corporate financier will be allowed to roam unrestrained in public, but must be tightly muzzled and leashed the moment it goes into a meeting, particularly any meeting held late at night when the breed is generally considered to be at its most dangerous.

Slightly surprisingly, the Bill specifies a third category of banker requiring restraint, the group regional manager. Like the corporate financier, the normally mild-mannered

regional managers will be free to roam at large, but must be muzzled when receiving stressful telephone calls from branch managers wanting a decision on the latest batch of small business loan applications.

Lord Alexander of NatWest and Sir John Quinlan of Barclays this week made last-ditch efforts to avert the impending legislation, promising to restore order to the lending pits. "Tosa" Alexander admitted that some of the Bank of England's criticisms were valid. "There were undoubtedly some departures from the principle of sound lending," he grudgingly growled. "Fit Bull" Quinlan promised that reforms were already in hand. "We are looking carefully at risk management procedures," he barked.

The prime minister, however, believes action is needed now. Indeed with Royal Insurance and Commercial Union getting the composite insurers well on their way to a £1.3 billion aggregated loss, not to mention the rich vein of scandal at Lloyd's of London, Mr Major is giving serious thought to a parallel Dangerous Insurers Bill. The industry, though, is confident of averting any such legislation. After all, they say, if the bill doesn't sink, it will almost certainly subsidise. Doesn't everything?

Sir John believes the prime minister's plan does have a terrier-tempting Achilles heel. No one can have failed to notice that Mr Major looks in need of £55 million for a little vote-winner he's cooking up in Manchester. But Sir John, wearing his weekend hat of chairman of the incipient Premier League, has also noted that Chelsea — the prime minister's favourite football club — has been given just two weeks to come up with £23 million or face eviction from its Stamford Bridge ground. Now, a £78 million loan syndicated six ways at Libor minus... well what shall we say, prime minister? Quick, where's that muzzle?

US growth revised upwards to 0.8%

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN WASHINGTON

THE American economy grew at an annual rate of 0.8 per cent in the final quarter of last year, significantly greater than thought, the government said yesterday.

The commerce department said the upward revision in the gross domestic product was due to new-found strength in consumer spending and a larger build-up in unsold inventories.

The revised 0.8 per cent rate of GDP growth was more than double the 0.3 per cent estimated a month ago. While analysts were happy to see stronger consumer demand, they worried that the unwanted build-up in inventories will force production cutbacks and depress growth in the early part of 1992.

The pick-up in growth was not accompanied by any resurgence of inflation. A GDP index measuring a changing basket of goods rose at an annual rate of 1.7 per cent in the final quarter, its best performance since 1965.

While the revision was likely to strengthen the argument of the Bush administration and others that the recession did indeed end last spring, economists noted that the anaemic growth rates since then have not been enough to make most Americans feel better times have arrived.

Indeed, the unemployment rate has continued to rise because growth has not been strong enough to absorb new workers into the work force.

Most analysts believe the economy will rebound in the April-June quarter as the low interest rates engineered by the Federal Reserve spur demand in key sectors such as housing and car sales. But the 1.3 per cent average growth over the past three quarters is far below the 6 per cent average recorded in the first year of a normal rebound.

The GDP performance for the whole year was unchanged, however, with the total economy declining by 0.7 per cent, the first annual setback since the 1982 recession.

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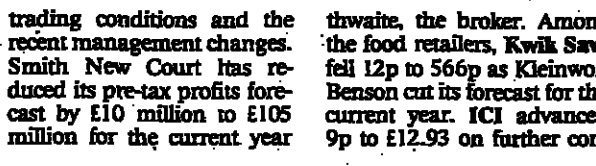
TT 29011

US approval for Zovirax lifts Wellcome shares

CapCo stays flat

South African support means the company will not have to sell assets cheaply to keep going. But there seems no reason why the shares, on a 41 per cent discount to net asset value, should appreciate greatly in the short term.

Ranks Hovis McDougall lost 5p to 202p on the back of a presentation for fund managers, arranged by Smith New Court, the broker. Stanley Metcalfe, the chairman, was unable to allay their fears about the current difficult



As the Eagle Star insurance company made a two-day drop of 25p, investors were increasingly worried about further drops in the value of the company's large indemnities at Eagle Star. The share price came on offer late on Thursday, but it fell over the market yesterday.

sideration of Thursday's full-year figures. The speculators seemed to be taking the view that the long, drawn-out battle for Macarthy may soon be over with the pharos eliding.

RECENT ISSUES					
Captal Industries Inc.	61	...	RIGHTS ISSUES		
Entel Preferred Capital (100)	102	...			
Fleming Insurance Warrantees	36	+ *	BTP 10p N/P (205)	20 + 1	
Linn Amer Tax & Inv A(194)	112		Roughneck Indemnity N/P (105)	14 -	
Lloyds Smir Co Poly Un (108)	98		BCC Group N/P (#15)	60 -	
Lloyds Smir Co's Dwp In (28)	37		Powair P/N N/P (115)	16 -	
Lloyds Smir Co's Cap In (62)	60		Sector Engineering Un N/P (58)	11 -	
Middlen Women	102		Wannagon N/P (350)	49 -	
River & Mkt Inc Tack 12-p	103		Westley Sp N/P (90)	4 + 2	
St. Superc Tr 12-p	122*				

Courtyard Leisure firm 1p to 28p on the USM after announcing it was in talks with TW Consultants, private company.

MICHAEL CLAR

□ Tokyo — Shares ended mixed after a day of snail-like movement. The Nikkei index

[illegible]

UNIT LINKED INSURANCE INVESTMENTS

[illegible]

Pension confusion increases

Pensions should be straightforward and easy to understand if people are to be able to make the right decisions at the right time to safeguard their old age. This week, another complication has been added for many of the 4.6 million people who have taken out personal pensions since 1988 and contracted out of the state earnings-related pensions scheme.

Just as those aged more than 40 were considering whether they should opt back into the state scheme, they are told they are to receive a 1 per cent bonus from 1993 at a cost of £175 million a year. In fact, because the rebate for those aged 30 and less is to be cut from 5.8 per cent to 4.8 per cent for the next five years, there will be no change in the standard rebate for those over 30.

They will, however, still receive less paid into their pension plan by the government from April 1993 in return for not being a burden on its pay-as-you-go top-up scheme because the incentive bonuses come to an end then.

Most people would rather make one decision and stick by it. Unfortunately, those over 40 still need to think about returning to the state top-up system when the incentive bonuses finish unless they are persuaded, from performance to date, that their particular personal pension is going to outperform the benefits promised by the state system.

Although much has been made of the age-related bonus, not a lot has changed for those over 40. Men over 45 should be looking at returning to the state scheme and women over 40 ought to be considering moving back.

They are better off than they would have been if the government's recommendation that the rebate should be reduced to 4.68 per cent across the board had been adopted. That would have brought down the age for moving back into the thirties for



COMMENT

LINDSAY COOK
WEEKEND MONEY EDITOR

women and early forties for men. By the time all those in the pensions age trap have made their decisions it will be time to assess the situation again, when the state earnings-related pension scheme is altered to take account of the equalisation of pension ages.

The system is too complex and there are too many interests being served other than those of the employees. Serps does not want people flooding back after having had years of bonuses for leaving the scheme. Some pension companies and financial advisers are reluctant to tell policyholders

that they would be better off returning to the state scheme. The two-tier rebate system will, no doubt, be used to confuse the issue further.

No deterrent

Banks fought long and hard for the right to circulate the names and addresses of customers round their insurance and investment arms so they could be inundated with mailshots about life assurance and personal equity plans, even if all

they had or wanted was a current account. Customers who do not welcome this intrusion finally appeared to have won the day.

The new banking code, which comes into operation on March 16, bans the passing on of information to other banking companies without the "express consent" of the customer.

However, this does not deter at least one of the high street banks, TSB, from saying in its new terms of business this week that it will continue to give customers' names to other parts of the bank unless customers expressly say they do not want this to happen.

Customers who go into a branch and carry out a transaction 28 days after they have received the terms and conditions will automatically trigger off mailshots as they will be assumed to have given their consent.

TSB will be able to continue

mailshotting with impunity. It can safely rely on many of its customers giving its terms of business booklet a cursory glance, at most, then throwing it in the bin or putting it in a drawer, unaware that the onus is on them to stop the flow of unwanted investment offers.

Another invidious method of getting customers to give consent, which cannot be called "express", comes from the Abbey National. Under the guise of an offer for a year's free insurance (which closes two weeks after the code comes into operation) the bank says that the information on the form will be passed on. At least the Abbey had the grace to say the form would be changed. All this goes against the spirit of a banking code developed mainly as a result of customer pressure.

Banks should ask for express consent by sending a document to customers that makes its purpose absolutely clear. If it is the case, as TSB claims, that most people want mailshots, then banks will get a lot of mail themselves.

Keeping up with new, untaxed benefits is a constant battle for the revenue-gatherers

Golden device to avoid tax

BY LINDSAY COOK, WEEKEND MONEY EDITOR

SOME employees are being paid in solid gold rather than cash to avoid National Insurance contributions. The schemes have been created by leading firms of accountants and other tax advisers after the ban last year on payment of wages in the form of unit trusts to avoid the tax.

Now employers are paying substantial bonuses in gold and vouchers. One scheme offers employees vouchers ranging from Marks & Spencer to theatre tickets.

The gold is held offshore so that no value-added tax has to be paid, and the payments can be organised so that the employee is at no risk from currency or gold price fluctuations. Others limit the risk of market fluctuations to a day for the employee before the gold is sold and cash is paid to their British bank accounts.

The schemes have been devised to save employers millions of pounds in National Insurance contributions at 10.4 per cent on bonuses. Gold is mainly being used to pay bonuses to highly paid employees at merchant banks, investment banks and securities houses. It is a recent innovation since Tony Newton, the social security minister, announced on November 6 that NI contributions would be levied on earnings paid in shares or unit trusts.

The move was to stop £25 million a year being lost in NI contributions on about £250 million paid in non-cash bonuses. In the main, companies paid staff in cash unit trusts, which have no initial charge and are subject to no market risk or bid-offer spread.

While the employees paid in gold usually earn too much to save any NI contributions of their own, as these are paid only on income of up to £390 a week, they are able to strike a deal with their employers to split the tax saved by the company in return for the

inconvenience and possible risk of the gold falling in value or the dollar moving against the pound before it can be sold.

For the schemes to avoid NI contributions the bonus has to be expressed in gold rather than sterling. The employee is paid so many ounces of bullion — worth about \$350 an ounce — which is typically held in Hong Kong or America.

To make this worthwhile, the companies should have bonuses of £250,000 to £500,000 to pay. A tax partner in one of the largest firms of accountants who did not want to be identified for fear of attracting official attention to his scheme, said that schemes which insulated both parties from risk could find the case of *Heaton v Bell* (1970) applied against them. They would then have to pay the NI contributions as well as the fees for the scheme.

Lesley Ferrar, tax partner, at KPMG Peat Marwick McLintock, said: "Almost all accountancy firms are prepared to give advice on allocated gold. Some companies have already paid bonuses in that way."

"The gold needs to be outside the UK and you need a bank to hold the gold. Almost every bank has stocks of gold that can be used."

"It costs fees to put a scheme in place for a client. We do not have a set scheme as such; we advise and will then tailor-make to individual requirements. Some large UK companies have big bonus bills. Banks may pay £5,000 to £10,000 to an individual employee but they have large staffs eligible. With 100 staff there can be a whacking bonus bill."

She continued: "We are in the peak bonus season. Many year ends are in December or March. Bonuses are paid shortly afterwards. This year it is particularly important



Bonus time: Lesley Ferrar, tax partner at KPMG Peat Marwick McLintock

that they are paid quickly as bonuses are taxed on a receipt basis. Those paid after April 5 could be caught by a 50 per cent rate of income tax if Labour wins the election."

Price Waterhouse has a gold scheme in place. Michael Eldridge, managing consultant responsible for the scheme said it had received a surge of enquiries on how to pay bonuses and some firms were advancing payment dates.

While the gold schemes are attractive for companies with relatively few staff receiving large bonuses, vouchers are intended for wider use. This week the Motivation Marketing Board, a company set up last year to provide incentive schemes for businesses, issued counsel's opinion to leading chartered accountants that voucher schemes legitimately escape National Insurance contributions and VAT. It offers 156 types of voucher which are redeemable in 42,473 outlets.

Gill Edwards, its principal, said the largest single bonus it had paid for a company to an employee was £50,000. He used vouchers to have a conservatory built in his garden, and to have the garden landscaped. He also

negotiated with the company to split the tax saving and took a Caribbean holiday.

A typical scheme would involve £500,000 split among 350 employees, said Mrs Edwards. Usually the companies selected the staff and the amounts they were to receive, and the employees then chose the vouchers.

"We did one scheme for 150 middle managers and they all seemed to want something different. One person wanted to spend a lot on luxury goods at Selfridges and to have a lavish weekend in a hotel, and at the other end of the scale someone wanted supermarket vouchers to pay for his groceries for six months."

The current voucher scheme is intended for bonuses of £100 to £7,500. The company plans to launch a new scheme on March 11 the day after the Budget — for bonuses of £15,000 to £100,000.

Vouchers are subject to income tax as a benefit in kind but are exempt from NI. This means that employees who earn less than £390 — £405 after April 6 — save up to 9 per cent in NI contributions and their employers save a further 10.4 per cent.

10,000 a year of business mileage and 3,000 private mileage. The cost to the employer is reduced to £4,094 if the employee buys the car and a fixed-profit car scheme is applied. The employee in these circumstances would be paid an extra £5,002 and would be equally well off.

Mr Myerscough said, however, that it was difficult to establish a pattern showing which employers and employees would do better without company cars. "There are major variables such as the cost of borrowing for car loans. Some individuals are better credit risks than others," he said. Other costs, like depreciation and tax rates, also varied, he added.

Calculations by Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte, the chartered accountant, show that an employer could save up to £537 offering a cash alternative rather than a company two-litre Ford Sierra GLX car to an employee doing 17,000 business miles a year. But a cash alternative would cost an employee £619 extra for an employee doing only 2,600 business miles a year.

Costs to employees remain constant in this example, but Clive Tulloch, partner at Coopers, said over 50 per cent of employees were probably better off with a company car than cash.

SARA MCCONNELL

Perks under pressure

BY SARA MCCONNELL

THOSE who receive cheap travel, goods or services as a perk of their job are almost certain to have to pay more tax on these even if the Inland Revenue loses an appeal in the House of Lords.

The result of the appeal is imminent and the Revenue is thought likely to win. Even if it loses, it is set to undertake a review of the way it taxes these benefits, which is likely to result in a bigger tax bill for the majority of employees affected.

The Revenue said it was still waiting for a result. "We recognise there are inherent problems and have continuing discussions with employers."

At the end of 1990, the Court of Appeal upheld a Revenue decision that employees must pay tax on the average cost of any benefit. The average cost would include an element of overhead costs like storage, heating and transport of goods for each employee. Staff would then pay tax on the difference

between what they paid and this average cost.

Nine masters at Malvern College, the independent public school, had brought the case, known as *Pepper v Hart*, to the Court of Appeal.

They sent their children to the school but paid only 20 per cent of the normal fees. They argued that they should have to pay tax only on the additional cost of educating their children, but the Revenue argued successfully that the tax should be paid on the average cost of the benefit, which would include an element of overheads like teachers' salaries, heating and other running costs. This would lead to the masters being assessed for tax on a higher benefit because the average cost would be higher than the additional cost.

The masters then appealed to the Lords. There is no option for a further appeal, unless the case goes to the European court.

Clive Tulloch, partner at Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte,

the chartered accountant, said: "The betting is that the Revenue will win. The trouble for employees is that, whatever the outcome, a review will be undertaken of how this tax will work."

Employers are unlikely to be faced with the potential administrative nightmare of having to calculate their overheads per employee. Instead, the average benefit could be worked out using a formula, perhaps along the lines of scale charges for company cars, Mr Tulloch said. Any formula to calculate an average benefit will almost certainly mean higher tax bills for the majority.

"Potentially this case affects everyone in the travel industry, working on trains, tubes, planes and most buses, everyone in the retail industry who gets cheap clothes, those in hotels and catering who get cheap food, and anyone else with perks," said Mr Tulloch.

Any change in the tax rules was unlikely to result in employers withdrawing perks.

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Stage set for unit trust charge cuts

Lindsay Cook gauges reaction to
Murray Johnstone's decision
to reduce funds' initial fees

MURRAY JOHNSTONE, the Scottish investment group, has cut the initial charges on its ten unit trusts to 1 per cent. Other groups are expected to follow by cutting the front-end charge on specific funds. The industry average is 5 to 6 per cent.

The move, which emulates many of the leading mutual funds in America, should make it cheaper to invest in companies through unit trusts than to buy individual shares. Vanguard, one of the largest American investment groups, had planned to bring its low-charge funds to Britain this year but put the plans on ice after talking to unit trust groups in London last year. Many groups already unofficially cut the front-end charge by varying amounts on all their funds for direct investors, when asked to do so. But because much of their business comes from brokers who are usually paid commission of up to 4 per cent, it is unlikely that other groups will cut their charges across the board.

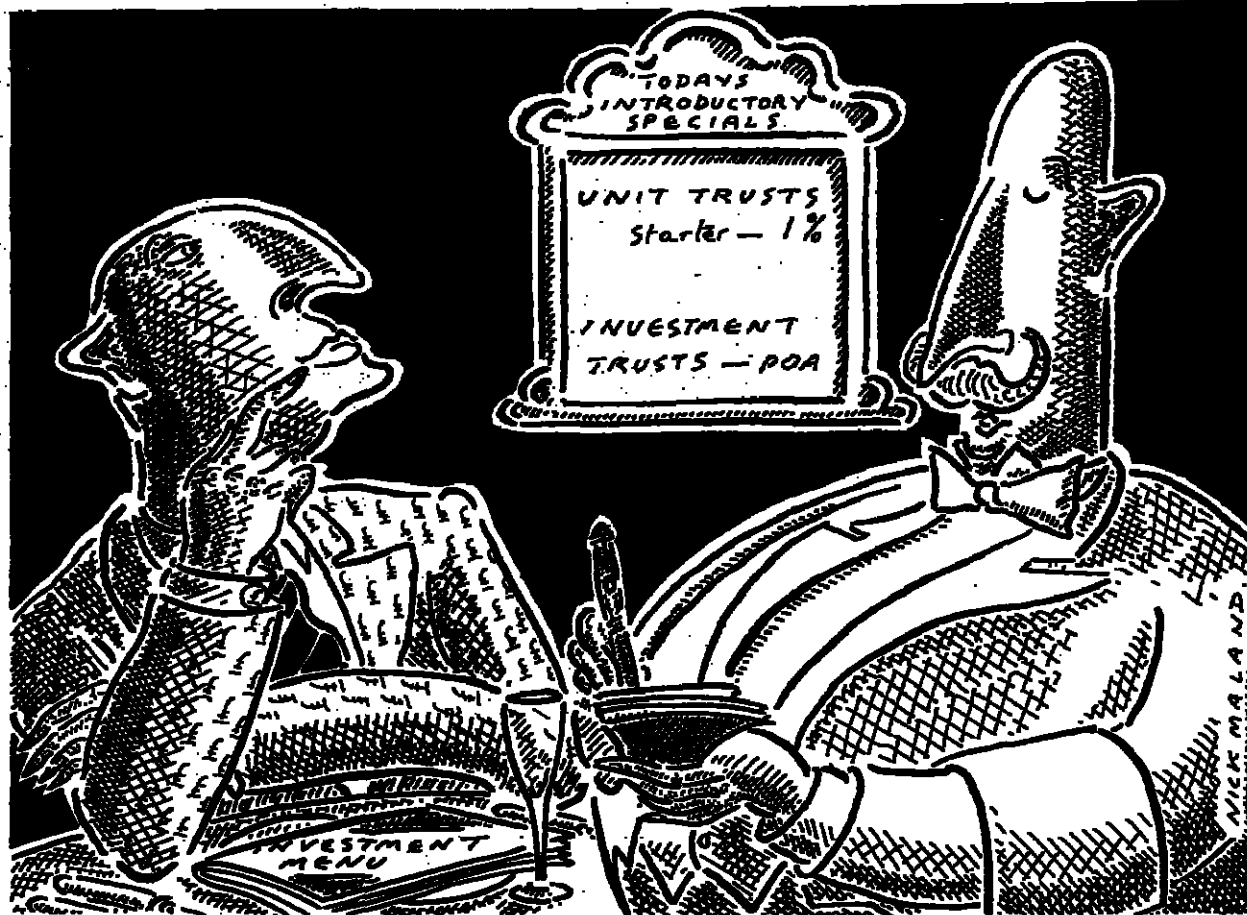
About six new unit trusts with low initial charges have been in the planning stages for some time but the groups concerned have not yet felt the markets are ready for the launches. Philip Warland, director general of the Unit Trust Association, said he

welcomed any initiatives on the pricing of unit trusts. The investment trust industry has stolen a march on unit trusts with their expensive savings schemes and low front-end charges in the four years since the stock market crashed.

The exception to this was M&G's first investment trust last autumn, which had similar charges to the group's unit trusts. The fund raised £246 million during its offer period. The current M&G investment trust offering has reduced its initial charge to 3.99 per cent. Tim Miller,

marketing director at M&G, the largest unit trust group, said it had no plans to reduce the initial charge on its unit trusts. "It was inevitable that someone would, at some point, look at cutting the front-end charge. I think that most unit holders who hold their funds for respectable lengths of time will benefit from having lower annual fees," he said. M&G charges 0.75 per cent on income funds and 1 per cent on others.

Murray Johnstone is increasing the annual management charge on three of its funds to 1.5 per cent. Fidelity has no front-end charge on its cash unit trust and its gilt and fixed-interest fund. Victoria Phillips, corporate communications man-



ager, said of the Murray Johnstone move: "It was half expected that this would happen. A lot of people have been looking at the economics. Fidelity has no-load funds in the States. Vanguard also came over to look at our market, but I think they decided that it was a bit early for our market to go that way. We'll all watch. We are always reviewing how best to market unit trusts. If this move draws attention to unit trusts, it is of interest to all of us."

Lazard Unit Trust Managers removed its front-end charges in 1988 and has seen funds under management increase from £70 million to £175 million since the change. Philip Stevens, director of Lazard Unit Trusts, said: "Experience in America suggested that the real future of the industry would belong to the more competitively priced product managers."

Brokers who sell the Murray Johnstone funds will receive a renewal fee of 0.5 per cent from the group. It had planned to limit this to those who provided £100,000 of new business but has been told by the Life Assurance and Unit Trust Regulatory Organisation it cannot do this. Murray Johnstone has £900 million of investment

trust funds under its management and £136 million of unit trusts. Its investment trusts tend to be more general in nature and the unit trusts have more specific investment aims. The exception to this is the Murray Acumen fund, which broadly mirrors a pension fund with 65 per cent in UK equities, 20 to 25 per cent in overseas equities and the rest in cash and bonds. Since the lower fees were announced, Murray Johnstone has received support from many brokers and one anonymous letter that read "no commission - no business."

Commission without advice

By SARA MCCONNELL

INVESTORS placing a lump sum in an investment trust savings scheme could find they have to pay up to 4 per cent to cover commission to an adviser, even if they approach the company direct.

Ivory & Sime, the investment trust company, charges a 4 per cent initial fee to all investors in its lump sum savings scheme, regardless of whether they apply through the company or use an adviser. Of this, 3 per cent is the commission that would be paid to a financial adviser, with the remaining 1 per cent for administration. Stewart Ivory, whose Scottish American trust has been running since 1873, makes an initial charge of 3 per cent for lump sum investments, which would be the commission paid to an adviser.

The Association of Investment Trust Companies' latest monthly information bulletin says most investment trust companies charge 1 per cent, at most. Many have no initial charge, except a stockbroker's commission of 0.2 per

cent, for buying shares in the investment trust company.

Fiona Mouro, director of information at the AITC, said: "All investors will pay a stockbroker's commission if they know what they want and take advice from a stockbroker. With investment trust savings schemes it is up to the managers to charge, but if they do, there are no stockbroker charges. Unit trusts generally charge an initial fee of between 5 and 6 per cent, which represents the difference, or spread, between the buying and selling prices of the units."

Alan McFarlane, a director at Ivory & Sime, said that the company wanted to encourage people investing lump sums to take independent advice rather than approach the company direct. "We want to encourage those with lump sums to get advice from somewhere," he said. Investors could avoid the deduction of the initial charge if they were prepared to pay a fee to an adviser but could not

escape it by going direct to Ivory & Sime.

Stewart Ivory introduced a lump sum savings scheme 18 months ago for investments of £2,000 and more. Those with lump sums to invest should take advice before committing themselves and the company does not want to discourage this by charging less to those who make a direct approach.

Saving regularly in an investment trust will not, however, cost as much. There is no fee for Ivory & Sime's regular savings plan. Stewart Ivory charges a setting-up fee of £10 on its regular savings plan. There are no dealing charges.

Some investment trust companies, such as Foreign & Colonial, pay no commission to intermediaries so no charge is passed on in any type of savings scheme. The only charge is a 0.2 per cent dealing commission for buying the shares. All purchases of shares also attract 0.5 per cent stamp duty.

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Portfolio
PLATINUM

For readers who may have missed a copy of The Times this week, we repeat below the week's Portfolio price changes (today's are on page 29).

Day	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
1	+6	+4	+7	+5	+5		
2	+8	+6	+2	+4	+2		
3	+9	+7	+4	+8	+3		
4	+8	+3	+7	+6	+4		
5	+7	+6	+3	+8	+3		
6	+8	+6	+1	+2	+3		
7	+8	+3	+2	+3	+7		
8	+6	+4	+7	+5	+4		
9	+8	+6	+4	+7	+3		
10	+8	+4	+3	+4	+6		
11	+7	+3	+4	+4	+5		
12	+8	+7	+5	+6	+4		
13	+8	+3	+3	+4	+6		
14	+5	+7	+2	+3	+3		
15	+5	+4	+6	+5	+4		
16	+8	+5	+4	+6	+3		
17	+5	+3	+8	+6	+4		
18	+7	+7	+4	+7	+3		
19	+5	+6	+2	+3	+4		
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23	+8	+3	+3	+5	+6		
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42	+7	+5	+3	+7	+4		
43	+7	+3	+2	+3	+7		
44	+5	+5	+3	+3	+2		

SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION
IN UNIT TRUST
INITIAL CHARGES

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FUND	OLD	NEW
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Murray European Fund	5.00%	1.00%
Murray Equity Income Fund	5.00%	1.00%
Murray Far Eastern Fund	5.00%	1.00%
Murray Olympiad	5.25%	1.00%
Murray Olympiad Income Fund	5.25%	1.00%
*Murray Smaller Companies Fund	5.00%	1.00%
*Murray UK Growth Fund	5.00%	1.00%
Murray Acumen Fund	5.00%	1.00%
Murray Acumen Reserve Fund	3.00%	1.00%

The table above gives details of the changes to initial charges. There will be no changes to the annual charges with the exception of the above 3 funds where the annual charge will be increased from 1% to 1.5% with effect from 1st June 1992.

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Richard Blot Lockhart, Director February 1992

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(5) "Unit" means a share in the Plan.
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Underlying investment is in M&G Recovery Investment Trust P.L.C., a new special capital investment trust with a planned life of ten years. The investment objective will be to provide Package Unit holders with an attractive total return from investing in the shares of companies which show potential for "recovery" but which are going through a difficult period, as well as from the income produced from those shares.

The Manager will continually seek new holdings to replace those where the prospects of recovery appear to have been fulfilled or where they seem to have been ill-founded. The Company's portfolio will be managed by M&G Investment Management Limited along similar lines to the existing M&G Recovery unit trust. Package Units are being offered by the Company at 100p each. Each Package Unit will consist of one Zero Dividend Preference Share, one Income Share and one Capital Share.

Investment in the Package Unit will equate to investing in an ordinary share in an investment trust without a split capital structure. Package Units are designed to offer investors capital growth and growing income over the life of the Company. The initial forecast annual gross dividend yield at the offer price of 100p is 5.9%.

New Investors If you have not already subscribed to a general PEP for the 1991/92 tax year you can put between £1,000 and £6,000 of Package Units in the M&G PEP. You must apply between 2nd and 27th March 1992.

Remember this opportunity closes at 2.00p.m. on 27th March 1992 after which date applications will not be accepted. Please note that investments can only be made in multiples of £1,000.

Existing PEP Holders With effect from 3rd April 1992 condition 22(6)(a) of the PEP Terms and Conditions is amended to that contained in this advertisement. If you already have an M&G PEP which was not introduced through a financial adviser, M&G will be sending you a special form.

Income Dividends from M&G Recovery Investment Trust P.L.C. will be paid quarterly. In addition, there will be four tax repayments from the Inland Revenue each year. You can choose either to have all of these paid automatically into your bank account or to have them reinvested in further Package Units of M&G Recovery Investment Trust P.L.C., thus enhancing the value of your PEP.

Initial Charge There is no initial charge for the PEP. The promotional costs payable by M&G Recovery Investment Trust P.L.C. will be 3.99% of the price of each Package Unit. This represents a fee to M&G Financial Services Limited for promoting the Company out of which it will pay all marketing costs and commissions.

If you choose the reinvestment option, there will be a charge of 5% plus VAT deducted from the sum reinvested.

Annual Charge M&G Recovery Investment Trust P.L.C. pays an annual investment management fee to M&G Investment Management Limited of 0.75% plus VAT and a custodian fee, estimated to be 0.015% plus VAT, to Clydesdale Bank P.L.C.; both calculated on the net assets of the Company M&G PEP holders pay an additional annual management charge of 0.25% plus VAT to M&G Financial Services Limited.

How to Apply for the M&G PEP Complete the PEP application form and send it with your cheque or banker's draft to be received no later than 2.00p.m. on 27th March 1992 at National Westminster Bank PLC, New Issues Department, PO Box 663, Harcliffe Way, Harcliffe, Bristol BS99 3JU. Applications received after that date will be returned.

Cashing in your Plan You can sell all or part of your holdings at any time by sending written instructions to us. If we receive your instructions before 11.00a.m. the Package Units will be sold in the market at about 2.30p.m. that day at the market price. Instructions received after 11.00a.m. will be treated as received on the following business day. Reinvestment of these proceeds within your M&G PEP is not possible.

Further Information We will write to you confirming your investment towards the end of April. You will receive the annual and half yearly Report and Accounts of the Company when they are published. Twice each year we send you a statement and valuation of your Plan made up to 5th April and 5th October.

Prices of Package Units will be quoted in the Financial Times. The price of shares and Package Units and the income from them can go down as well as up. You may not get back the amount you invested. The value to you of the tax benefits of a PEP will depend on your own circumstances. The tax regime of PEPs could change in the future.

Your rights as a planholder are defined by the Terms and Conditions of the M&G Personal Equity Plan set out in this document.

The Plan Manager is M&G Financial Services Limited, a member of IMRO, M&G House, Victoria Road, Chelmsford CM1 1FB. Telephone (0245) 266266.

M&G Securities Limited, the manager of the unit trust referred to, is a member of IMRO and Lauto.

NOTES FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE M&G NEW 1991/92 £6,000 PEP APPLICATION FORM

- If you have already subscribed to a 1991/92 general PEP with a manager other than M&G you cannot invest in the M&G PEP under this offer for the current tax year.
- This application form is designed to allow you to subscribe in the tax year running from 6th April 1991 to 5th April 1992.
- Your National Insurance number can be found on your pay slip. It will have the format: 2 letters, 6 numbers, 1 letter.
- OR
- If a person's National Insurance number is acceptable, this can be found in your personal book or, if paid directly into your bank account, will appear on your bank statement. A National Insurance number is NOT acceptable if it is not on your pay slip.
- You must complete the application form and send it to M&G Financial Services Limited, PO Box 663, Harcliffe Way, Harcliffe, Bristol BS99 3JU. If you apply to open a PEP for 1991/92 and to subscribe to it in 1992/93 then the application is conditional on the 1991/92 application not being withdrawn at the 1992/93 application. If you do not receive a letter confirming this from the Company by the total of your subscriptions.

APPLICATION FORM THE M&G NEW 1991/92 £6000 PEP

The application for Package Units contained in this form cannot be withdrawn. An application, using this form, to open a PEP may be withdrawn by returning the accompanying withdrawal slip to the Plan Manager at any time prior to 5th April 1992. Full details and Terms and Conditions of the PEP including a copy of this application form are attached.

Please send the completed form to: **REGISTRATION DETAILS**

Title: Mr/Mrs/Ms/Ms/Other

Full Forenames

Surname

Permanent Address

Postcode

Pin your cheque or banker's draft here

IMPORTANT: Your M&G Personal Equity Plan application and reimbursement cannot be accepted without your National Insurance Number OR National Pension Number (see note 2 above).

National Insurance No. _____

OR

National Pension No. _____

Tax District (if known) _____

Reference No. (if known) _____

If you wish to attend and vote at shareholders' meetings and to receive additional information issued to shareholders, please indicate "Y" in this box: ☐

Your dividends and tax credits will be reinvested automatically in your Plan unless you want them paid direct to your bank account in which case please indicate "N" in this box and a dividend mandate will be sent in due course. ☐

To M&G Recovery Investment Trust P.L.C.

I offer to subscribe for _____ Package Units (see note 3 above) in M&G Recovery Investment Trust P.L.C. at the price of £1 per Package Unit on the Terms and Conditions of Application set out in the accompanying advertisement dated 14th February, 1992 (as such Terms and Conditions are varied and supplemented by the terms of this application form, and in particular note 4 above).

I enclose my cheque or banker's draft made payable to 'National Westminster Bank PLC A/C M&G PEP', crossed 'Not Negotiable' for _____

I hereby renounce on 5th April 1992 (subject to revocation before that date), the Package Units in M&G Financial Services Limited to hold in my PEP.

To M&G Financial Services Limited

I wish to make a subscription to my existing M&G PEP for the tax year ending 5th April 1992 or, if I do not have such a plan then I wish to open an M&G PEP for the tax year ending 5th April 1992.

I declare that:

- I am aged 18 years or over.
- I am resident and ordinarily resident in the UK for tax purposes or, though not resident, perform duties which by virtue of Section 132(4)(a) of the Taxes Act (Crown Employees serving overseas) are treated as being performed in the United Kingdom.
- I have not subscribed to any other general Personal Equity Plan in or for the tax year ending 5th April 1992 nor any future tax year.
- I will not subscribe to any other general Personal Equity Plan for any tax year for which I subscribe or shall subscribe to this Plan.
- I will inform M&G Financial Services Limited promptly of any change in my circumstances which affects any of this information.

I hereby authorise M&G Financial Services Limited:

- to hold my cash subscriptions and the Plan investments, distributions, dividends, interest, cash and any other rights or proceeds received in respect of them in the Personal Equity Plan;
- to make all appropriate claims for tax relief in respect of Plan investments on my behalf;
- on my written request to transfer or pay to me any Plan investments, interest, cash, distributions, dividends, rights or other proceeds in respect of such investments held in the Plan.

I agree that a Personal Equity Plan opened by the Plan Manager pursuant to this Application will be governed by the Terms and Conditions set out in the accompanying advertisement.

I hereby declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief the above information is true and correct.

Signature _____ Date _____ 1992

Professional Adviser (if applicable) _____

M&G Ref No. _____

YCA

Only return this form if you wish to withdraw your application for an M&G PEP. This form must be received before 5th April 1992 at Planned Savings Department, M&G Financial Services Limited, M&G House, Victoria Road, Chelmsford CM1 1FB. I wish to withdraw my application for an M&G Personal Equity Plan.

Title: Mr/Mrs/Ms/Ms/Other

Full Forenames

Surname

Permanent Address

Postcode

Signature _____ Date _____

THE M&G NEW £6,000 PEP FOR 1991/92

Banks in the dock over fading returns on old accounts

By Liz Dolan

A CASE under consideration by the banking ombudsman promises to extend the vexed question of "obsolete" building society accounts into the area of bank deposit accounts.

Monique Allan, a barrister, is asking the ombudsman to look into circumstances surrounding a seven-day deposit account she opened with Barclays in 1973. She said: "When I opened the account, it was the best available. I used it whenever I received large sums for which I had no immediate use."

The sums deposited dwindled during the late Eighties, when other requirements took precedence. The balance on the account remained less than £5,000 until October 1991, when she again needed to deposit a substantial sum. Her bank manager advised her to open a capital advantage account because

it offered a better rate of return than her existing account.

She said: "I was horrified to discover that, since April 1991, the deposit account had been paying just over 1 per cent. There must be millions of pounds sitting in these accounts subsidising the costs of bright shiny new products."

"Lots of people simply put a large amount of money into an account and live off the interest. They should be notified of any changes that affect their income. Banks are relying on the complete lethargy of the vast majority of their account holders."

Barclays said it was impossible to notify individual customers every time there was a rate change. A spokeswoman said: "We have 6 million personal customers. It would cost millions to tell them all. We advertise extensively in the press and in branches." There was also a Freephone number, 0800 400 100,

open every weekday between 8 am and 9 pm that carried all the rates.

Miss Allan said: "It's rubbish to say they cannot notify everyone. They manage to tell us about all manner of things like travel insurance and personal loans when they send us our statements. Why can't they tell us about relevant rate changes at the same time? People don't necessarily read advertisements."

When a bank reduces a rate to a derisory level, it has changed the nature of the product, Miss Allan argued. "My seven-day account was no longer an investment account. I was getting a lower rate of interest than Barclays' current account customers."

Deposit account holders with other banks are suffering similar problems, Lloyds said: "We are phasing out our seven-day account. We are not marketing it any more and new

customers are advised to open an instant saver's account, which pays a much higher rate."

Like Barclays, Lloyds is paying just over 1 per cent net on the "obsolete" account. The instant account pays 4.14 per cent net, on sums of more than £5,000, rising to 4.89 per cent on £50,000-plus.

Lloyds said: "We have advertised the new accounts widely in the branches and in the national papers, as well as on the bottom of statements. We expect our customers to take charge of their own finances." By the end of this year, Lloyds will be recording current interest rates at the bottom of every statement.

National Westminster admitted that a number of its customers still had money in older, lower-paying accounts, but said: "There has been a lot of publicity in branches and the national press about the new ac-

counts. We also put inserts in statements and print information on service till screens."

Yorkshire Bank is an honorable exception. A spokeswoman said: "We don't have obsolete accounts; we simply improve the rate on the ones we've got. It's an increasingly competitive area, and I know a lot of the other banks have introduced new accounts to attract new money, leaving the old ones on lower rates. We don't do that."

"Our customers tell us they don't understand complicated rates tables, so we keep everything as simple as possible."

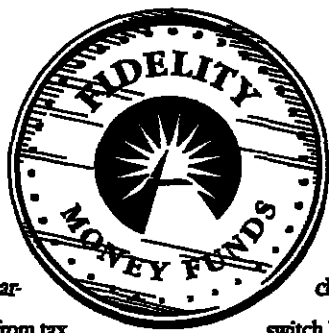
Yorkshire's seven-day deposit account pays 1.89 per cent on balances of less than £2,000, rising to 5.63 per cent on £10,000-plus. The one-month notice account, which allows instant access to £500 a month, pays 6.39 per cent on amounts of more than £10,000.



"Horrified" at interest rate: Monique Allan

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Employee dismayed at savings payment delay

SAVE As You Earn schemes can prove a money spinner for employers, as well as for the workforce. An employee who joined Reed International's SAYE Sharesave scheme a year ago, was astonished to discover from his first annual statement that the money was credited to his account an average of 30 days after being deducted from his monthly salary cheque. One payment took 55 days to reach his account (Liz Dolan writes).

He said: "It strikes me as unethical to hang on to other

company secretary at Reed, said the delay was probably due to the company's subsidiaries all having different pay dates. The company waited until every employee in the group had been paid before sending the monthly total to the Halifax. He said the delay would not make any difference to the amount payable at the end of the five-year term because "technically, the account doesn't pay interest, it pays a bonus". In its annual report for the year to March 31, Reed said 2,684 of its

National Savings, the country's largest SAYE operator, said it expected employees to deliver the money within six working days of deduction from salaries. About 80 per cent of employees complied with this request. SAYE schemes are usually linked to a share option scheme, which can be exercised after either five or seven years, depending on the terms of the contract. The shares can be bought only from the proceeds of the savings scheme. The price of the shares is fixed at the beginning of the period and must not be less than 80 per cent of the market value of the shares at that time. Employees agree to pay a fixed monthly sum of between £10 and £250. If the options can be exercised after five years, employees have three choices. They can use the accrued money to buy the shares, take the proceeds in cash, or let the contract run for a



British employees were involved in the scheme. A complex corporate structure does not necessarily lead to payment delays. ICI said its employees' SAYE contributions were always paid into relevant accounts immediately after deduction. The money was electronically transferred into individuals' accounts using the bankers' automated clearing services (BACS) system, it said.

Nigel Davies, assistant

fixed at the beginning of the period and must not be less than 80 per cent of the market value of the shares at that time. Employees agree to pay a fixed monthly sum of between £10 and £250. If the options can be exercised after five years, employees have three choices. They can use the accrued money to buy the shares, take the proceeds in cash, or let the contract run for a further two years to earn an extra bonus. SAYE schemes pay generous bonuses at the five and seven-year stages. Contracts set up between September 1, 1990, and August 31, 1991, attract a five-year bonus equal to 15 monthly payments, plus an annual interest payment of 5 per cent. If the saver opts to continue for a further two years, the bonus increases to 30 monthly payments.

Expressions of consent

By Sara McConnell

BANK customers could find that they have unwittingly given their consent to being sent mailshots from other companies in the same banking group, despite the provision in the new banking code that customers have to give their "express consent" for their names to be passed on.

TSB is sending its 7 million customers its new terms of business this week before the code comes into operation on March 16. It will tell customers it is up to them to write to their branch if they do not want their names passed on, otherwise, "we can share information which you've given us with other companies in the TSB group".

The bank continues that "for existing TSB customers, these general terms and conditions become effective 28 days after you have received them. If you use your account after this time, it will mean you have accepted them."

Frank Wilson, TSB's marketing manager, said that "using your account" meant physically coming into the branch and making a transaction. Money paid out by

existing standing orders or direct debits would not count. Abbey National has not yet sent out new terms of business to its customers. However, Abbey National financial services, part of the Abbey group, is offering £1,000-worth of free accident insurance. Small print on the application form says: "We

agree that information may be disclosed to companies in the Abbey National group and used to send us details of any products or services which Abbey National thinks may be of interest to us." The Abbey said it intended to change the statement.

Comment, page 21

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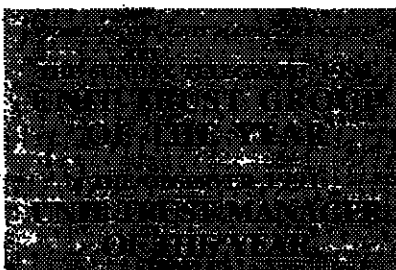
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Pensioners to compare notes on EC

With a 'parliament' about to meet in Luxembourg, Shirley Davenport looks at retirement provisions across Europe



Front line: Britain's elderly do not score highly when their pensions are compared with those in other European Community countries

THE pensioners of Europe will discuss which countries give them the best deal in state benefits when they meet in Luxembourg next month. More than 500 representatives of pensioners' groups have been selected from almost every European Community constituency to pool information about pension levels in each country and state provisions in health and housing.

Britain is not expected to score highly. When the EC last worked out the purchasing power of pensioners in each member country, based on 1986 figures, only Irish pensioners appeared worse off than those in Britain. The social security department says it is impossible to compare like with like because each country operates a different system. Those countries that give larger pensions may expect their pensioners to pay for medical treatment and do not offer such a comprehensive range of means-tested benefits as in Britain.

However, British pensioners claim that since the earnings link with pension levels was scrapped in 1980, a single pensioner is now £15 a week poorer and a married couple has lost £25 a week. Ken Coates, Nottingham MEP, said the object of the pensioners' parliament would be to force EC pensioner groups into a network to exchange information. One aim would be to level up benefits in countries with the poorest provision. He added: "At present, the UK ranks pretty low in the provision it makes for its pensioners. The pensioners' parliament is an experiment

to see what will happen when pensioners have access to more information and can organise themselves to apply pressure."

Britain is one of the few countries to pay a flat-rate pension, combining it with an additional amount based on earnings for those not contracted out of the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme (Serps).

Most other European countries pay earnings-related pensions and provide increases more frequently.

The Liberal Democrats and Labour have declared their intentions to raise the state pension and link it to average earnings if either wins the general election.

'Countries that give larger pensions may offer fewer benefits'

Several countries base pension increases on retail prices, but while that happens only once a year in Britain, Spain and Portugal the adjustments are made twice a year in France and Denmark, and three times a year in Greece. Germany and The Netherlands link their pensions to wage trends, while the Italians use the difference between wage rates and cost of living to calculate theirs.

Robert Stansfield, general secretary of the National Federation of Retirement Pensions Associations, said: "There are two nations of pensioners in Britain. There are those with good occupational pensions and Serps, and others retired years ago with pensions and savings now eroded by inflation, being forced to claim means-tested benefits."

Even with the addition of Serps and graduated pensions, a British pensioner does less well than in most EC

countries. In addition to £2,704 basic state pension, a man on an £18,000 salary, for instance, retiring after 40 years of national insurance contributions, would receive £48.78 a week Serps and £5.72 graduated pension, provided his salary had always maintained an equivalent level, making a total of £5,338 a year.

A woman on £15,000 salary with only 30 years of contributions would receive a reduced flat-rate pension of £2,136.16 a year, which increases to £4,392 with a weekly £4 graduated pension and £39.40 Serps.

However, according to Eurobenefits, a group of employee benefit consultants, the two would fare better in most other EC countries where state pensions are based on earnings. They would be wealthiest in Luxembourg, where the man would receive £15,356 a year, and the woman £7,050. Although retirement age is 65 for both, a reduced pension is payable for early retirement from the age of 60. The figures, relating to a single person's entitlement on January 1, are based on 125 per cent of national average earnings for the man, and on 175 per cent for the woman.

In Spain, where job category determines individual pensions, the man would receive a generous £11,705 a year if he had worked in administration. For the woman working in a clerical job, the annual pension would be £8,427.

The Italians, with a pensionable age of 60 for men and 55 for women, due to be raised to 65 for both by 2015, would pay the man £14,400 a

year and the woman £9,000. In Belgium, in addition to the man's pension of £7,389 and the woman's £5,525, a small holiday allowance would be paid in May.

France, which provides holiday discounts for pensioners, depending on the size of pension, would pay the same man £7,320 a year and let him retire at 60, while in Germany, where men have the option of retiring on an unreduced pension at 63, until the year 2001, he would receive £8,307.

The Danish pension system, with the basic paid at a flat rate of about £4,153, would allow both man and woman £5,948, which includes a means-tested supplement and additional pension from the mandatory labour market pension plan for employees. In The Netherlands, where a flat-rate pension is paid to everybody at 65, each would be entitled to £5,513 a year, assuming that voluntary contributions were made to maintain a full record during years of unemployment. The Greek government, which allows men to retire at 62 and women at 57 if both have more than 35 years of insurance contributions, would provide the man with £4,634 a year; the woman £2,734.

John Jolliffe, senior partner of J A Jolliffe, consulting actuaries, in Redhill, Surrey, said: "Those countries with high pensions make little provision for occupational pension schemes. When occupational pension provision is added to the state pension, the levels come much closer to the higher amounts paid in other countries."

'What will happen when pensioners have access to more information?'

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Boast under investigation

By SARA MCCONNELL

THE CLAIMS of a scheme that boasts that members can earn £1,000 a week after two years for an investment of £30 a month is under investigation by the Advertising Standards Authority.

The ASA has written to Futures Product World, of Wombwell, South Yorkshire, to challenge earnings claims on publicity being posted out by the company. Futures Product World is promoting a pyramid selling scheme, in which people joining pay £30 a month then receive bonuses for recruiting others to the scheme. If the people recruited stay in the scheme, the person who introduced them receives commission. A mailshot advertising the company's Master Plan scheme says: "The Master Plan is a three part opportunity! A double multi-level matrix organisation plus an import export retail opportunity in which you can make up to an incredible £1,000 a week for doing nothing at all... Six months in you could be earning a six figure income... Incredibly only a £30 commitment is required."

The company is now "the subject of a monitoring investigation", the ASA has confirmed. It said: "We would challenge the mailshot on the grounds that any earnings claims made have to be substantiated. It also has to describe properly any work involved and we would want to question any financial outlay required."

Tom Leigh, the founder of Futures Product World, said he had received a letter from the ASA and would be replying at the end of the month. The benefits outlined in the mailshot and in the booklet, *The Master Plan*, relied on members joining and staying in the plan, Mr Leigh said.

"At the moment, we have a 300-day guarantee where people can get their money back at any time but when we spoke to the members about it they thought it disadvantageous because people are running out before they have seen the opportunity working for them. The members decided that people should try it for a year although they would get their money back if they dropped out before then."

He added: "If the thing keeps going, then it is a very safe investment." Futures Product World, which started last April, has 2,300 members and Mr Leigh said that "less than 20 or 30" had left. "We are not a get rich scheme. It is a progressive payout plan."

New regulations on pyramid selling were introduced in 1989 as part of the Fair Trading Act 1973. In a guide to the legislation, the trade department gives warning that although pyramid selling is not illegal, people should not get carried away. It says: "A few people who get in right at the start may make money but don't let yourself get carried away by their success stories. The later entrants at the bottom of the pyramid may not do well because it is not easy to recruit people."

The guide says that "any other advertisement, prospectus, circular or notice which indicates the financial benefits which can be obtained from the scheme must show the date on which the scheme started in the United Kingdom, the name and address of the promoter, a description of the goods and services covered by the scheme and the nature of the business offered... Where earnings claims are made as to earnings attainable during any period, the claim must be accompanied by the state-ment the figures shown do not represent any automatic earnings. Actual earnings will depend on time and effort spent on the business and the number of participants in the scheme."

The Futures Product World mailshot and booklet do not carry this warning but to be fair, it is not clear whether they are obliged to anyway.

The trade department said that it could not comment on individual companies. "It would depend on the substance of the mailshot. If it does say how much money would be earned, it would probably need a statutory warning. It is decided on a case by case basis," a spokesman said.

Mr Leigh said: "The law in this country is very vague about what is legal or isn't legal in this kind of field. There are the pyramid selling laws which we don't strictly come under but which we try to obey. The pyramid selling laws refer to people buying mountains of products but of course they do not do that with us."

Leigh: payout plan

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Sun Alliance to push up premiums

SUN Alliance, the largest household insurer, will raise its contents insurance premiums by up to 35 per cent on April 1, reflecting rises in costs and numbers of claims.

Hardest hit will be those with Sun Alliance's Home Insurance policy. This policy allows people to choose the elements of cover they want, either just contents or contents with unspecified and specified all-risks cover outside the home. Jeff Kehoe, Sun Alliance's underwriting manager, household, said the cost of contents cover alone would go up by an average of 25 per cent, while cover for unspecified risks outside the home would cost between 10 per cent and 15 per cent more. There will be slight increases on cover for specified items. The maximum increase anyone would see was 35 per cent including the all risks increase, Mr Kehoe said.

He added: "People are taking more personal possessions outside the home, like jewellery, watches, sports equipment, Walkmans. A CD Walkman can be worth more than a hundred pounds."

Those with simpler packaged policies covering contents and all risks will see

increases of between 20 and 35 per cent, Mr Kehoe said. He stressed that Sun Alliance wanted to encourage policyholders to equip their homes with at least minimum security measures, like five lever deadlocks and key operated window locks. It is offering discounts if security measures are taken.

Sun Alliance will be publishing its annual figures in April. In 1990, the number of claims made rose by 30 per cent and the cost of claims rose by 40 per cent, and there is little reason to suppose that they will be better this year.

Commercial Union this week announced a £51 million loss on domestic insurance last year. It was the first of the big insurers to announce its figures. The cost of claims in 1991 was 53 per cent up on 1990 while the number of claims was up 36 per cent.

CEI last raised its contents insurance rates in October last year, by an average of 12 per cent. "As our results imply, we will be keeping a tight eye on rates although we have no definite plans to raise them at the moment," the company said.

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BARCLAYS Unicorn unit holders are now eligible for shareholder perks from companies whose shares are held by the funds. Discounts on holidays in Africa, 15 per cent off Austin Reed clothes, and free entry to Appleby Castle in Cumbria are among the additional benefits for the investors. Peter Dennis, Barclays Unicorn's managing director, said: "These schemes help people to identify more closely with the companies in which they have, through our unit trusts, invested their money." Unit trust holders can obtain information about the scheme on 081 680 2424 extension 3208.

NORWICH Union is to accept premium payments by Switch cards from its general business customers. The customers can use their cards over the counter or by telephone.

EIGHT out of ten current account holders have heard of cheque accounts paying interest, but only about 35 per cent of all current account customers actually earn interest on their cheque accounts, according to a survey carried out by the Nationwide Building Society. Nationwide was first to introduce an interest-paying current account five years ago.

THE Halifax Building Society is now offering a single-company personal equity plan service and a corporate Pep facility to companies.

A NEW guide for pension funds stresses the need for vigilance among trustees. The ultimate responsibility for long-term strategy, performance and appointment of investment managers is the trustee, it says. There must be clear mutual understanding between the trustee and the investment manager and self-investment should be avoided.

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<p>TENNIS</p> <p>Bates pays tribute to opponent</p>	<p>RUGBY LEAGUE</p> <p>St Helens look for instant reclamation</p>
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St Helens look for instant recovery

BY KEITH MACKLIN

Results page 35

Chris Wilkinson, the No. 2 seed, had a smooth passage through to a semi-final against Massimo Ardinghi, of Italy.

LANE use the club as a wintered
down run of fixtures and
enough injuries to fill a hospi-
tal ward. John Monie, the
Wigan coach, is so deter-
mined to do it again that he
will probably ask the five men
who will play for Great Brit-
ain against France next Sat-
urday to play for Wigan. The
crossers' second main prob-
lem is that they have been
forced to give up the
game after a series of head
injuries.

□ Roy Powell, the Great Brit-
ain forward, is expected to
join Bradford Northern in a
£80,000 move from Leeds
after nine years at the club.

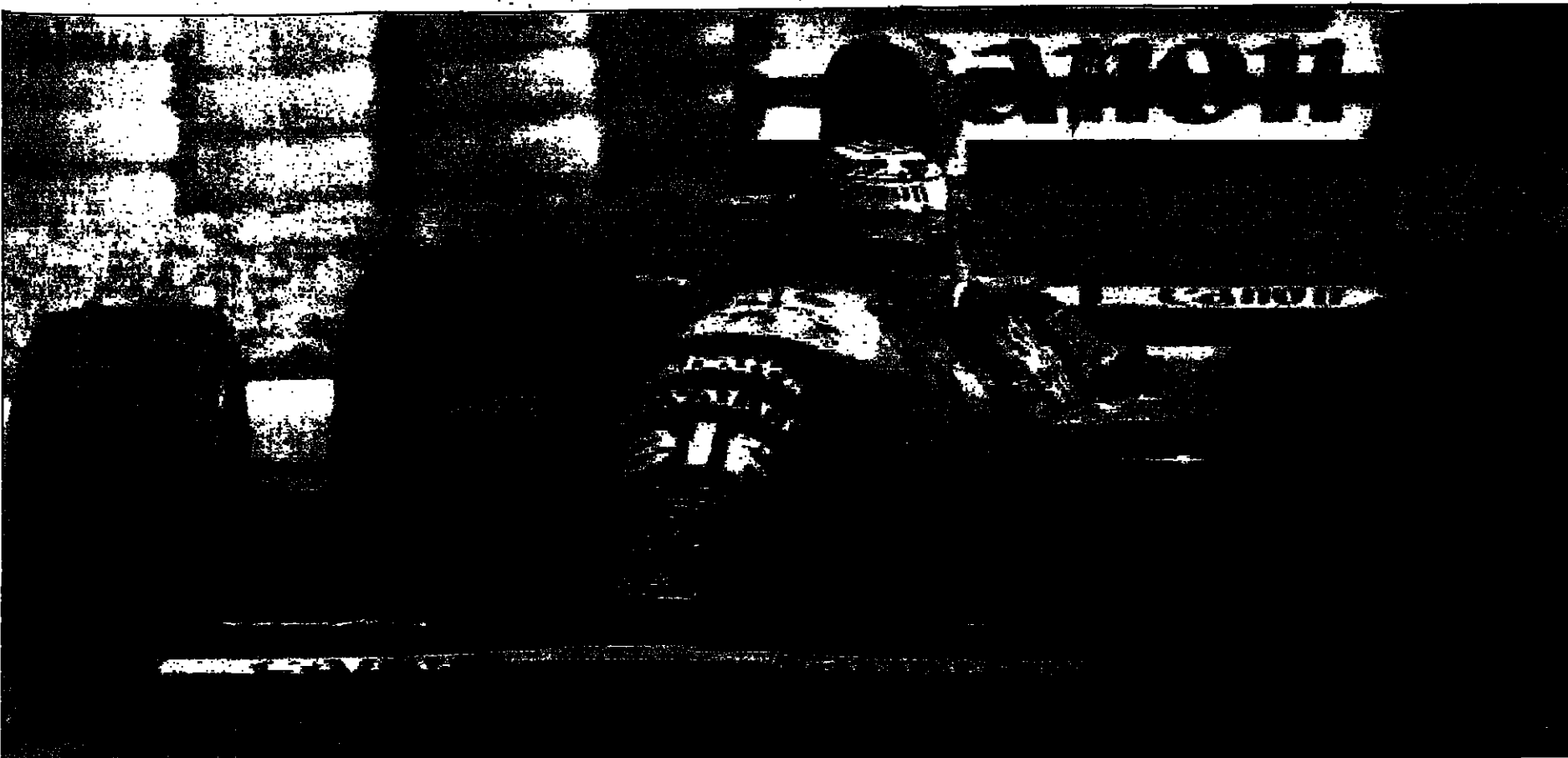
Wigan are looking menacing yet again. Last season, they came from behind to take the title despite a horrendous run of injuries and eight injuries to a hospital ward. John Monie, the Wigan coach, is so determined to do it again that he will probably ask the five men who will play for Great Britain against France next Saturday as well as horrendous £1 million debts.

□ Ray Owens, the London Crusaders scrum half, has been forced to give up the game after a series of head injuries.

□ Roy Powell, the Great Britain forward, is expected to join Bradford Northern in a £80,000 move from Leeds after nine years at the club.

[illegible]





Driving force: Nigel Mansell was in devastating form again in his Williams-Renault at the Kyalami circuit, easily setting the fastest time during the first practice session yesterday for Sunday's South African grand prix. Amati in a spin, page 34

Injury cloud over Imran dims Pakistan's World Cup prospects

England seek safe waters

FROM ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT
IN ADELAIDE

GRAHAM Gooch is so determinedly focused on his own team's programme that he steadfastly declines to discuss any other World Cup results. He will accept, though, that if things fall their way tomorrow, England are going to require a dramatic decline in form to surrender a semi-final position.

Five victories, from the eight preliminary round fixtures, will guarantee progress to the knockout finals. England have so far won two out of two; beating Pakistan here tomorrow would put them in clover, two more wins needed and the coming opposition to include Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe.

If, from a great distance, it all seems to be going suspiciously well, I can only confirm the impression. Take yesterday. While England arrived here full of hope that Allan Lamb would be fit to strengthen the side, Pakistan were far less positive about Imran Khan, who aggravated a sprained right shoulder while warming up for Thursday's win over Zimbabwe.

Lamb is important to England and would undeniably add zest and initiative to the middle-order. It has, however, already been shown that he is not indispensable, a distinction that Pakistan have persistently been unable to deny Imran.

Forced to play their opening game without him, last Sunday, Pakistan were as clueless as novice explorers suddenly shorn of their guide and compasses. Over the years, it has often been this way, despite being less than fully recovered.

He did not bat, did not bowl and supervised the out-cricketer from the deep field. But Pakistan won comfortably, as indeed they should have done, and yesterday, as their captain joked about the impact other captains (Gooch, Crowe, Wessels) were having on this competition, the players wore a more relaxed air.

Within this hectic competition is a daily, cultural bandwagon by air. Loiter at almost any of the main airports in Australia or New Zealand of a morning and you will see

	P	W	L	N	PR	PS
England	2	0	0	4		
New Zealand	3	0	0	3		
Sri Lanka	3	1	1	0	3	
West Indies	2	1	1	0	2	
Pakistan	2	1	1	0	2	
South Africa	1	1	0	0	2	
India	2	0	2	0	0	
Australia	2	0	2	0	0	
Zimbabwe	2	0	2	0	0	

FICTIONES (all times GMT): Today: Australia v India (Brisbane, 23.20); England v Pakistan (Adelaide, 23.20); Sri Lanka v West Indies (Adelaide, 23.20).

one or more of the teams coming or going. Their travel dress, in some cases, is indicative. England wear tracksuits, hardly elegant but at least a uniform, and a revealing one. Pakistan's players wear team blazers but there, it seems, ends their obligation to conform. Few wear ties, some have floral shirts and Imran, yesterday, sported jeans, sandals and no socks.

They are in appearance as they are on the field, diverse and often disunited. Only Imran, for all his own wilfulness, has been able to successfully harness the talent

available and that is why the team manager, Intikhab Alam, was speaking of the possibility that he will play with a painkilling injection in his sprained shoulder, even if he cannot bowl.

With Waqar Younis back at home, Imran's bowling had assumed a new significance for his side. If he cannot operate, Pakistan will again be obliged to use more slow bowling than they would like, especially on a ground where the short, square boundaries are no incentive to spin.

England may even consider omitting Phil Tufnell here, though he is certain to play a part against Australia in Sydney next week. They might also be wise to conserve their strokeplayers. Botham included, for the middle-order on the premise that seeing off Wasim Akram without casualties will open up an Aladdin's cave against the inadequate support bowling. Stewart and Gooch could sensibly, if temporarily, resume their Test-match pairing at the top of the order.

The most potent threat to England's evening progress is the weather. Taken at face value, the weekend forecast for Adelaide guaranteed rain

interference and hinted at a complete washout. No reserve days are allocated during the qualifying round and if a minimum of 15 overs per side cannot be bowled, each country takes one point.

Floods have been widespread in Queensland recently and India's game with Sri Lanka at Mackay yesterday was predictably abandoned. It ruined the tropical city's first official international, left the teams with a point apiece and deprived India, who lost their first game of the tournament to England, of match practice. India now meet Australia in Brisbane tomorrow in what might have been an eagerly awaited clash of the last two champions but turns out to be an anxious scrap between two winless teams.

Australia beat India five times out of six during the World Series Cup and would ordinarily expect to win again. These, however, are not ordinary days for Australian cricket. David Boon is likely to again deputise as wicketkeeper for the injured Healy, and more changes are imminent, but the present mood of the country is such that nobody will be surprised if India win.

Mandela joins the Cup joy

FROM JOHN WOODCOCK
IN AUCKLAND

NOTHING could give a better idea of the indivisibility of the new United Cricket Board of South Africa (UCBSA) than the message sent by the president of the African National Congress (ANC) to Kepler Wessels, captain of South Africa's World Cup team, and Dr Ali Bacher, managing director of the board, after the defeat of Australia in Sydney on Wednesday.

Please accept hearty congratulations from me personally, as well as from the leadership of the ANC and the millions of South Africans our organisation represents. Your achievement indicates the talent that abounds in our country and what South Africa can achieve when opportunities are equal and open to all. Your victory proves that a non-racial South Africa will be a strong, successful and prosperous country. With best wishes, Nelson R Mandela.

Dr Bacher is one of a fast-growing column of South Africans who are in Auckland for today's World Cup match between New Zealand and South Africa.

"When the tunnel got darkest," Dr Bacher says of South Africa's years in isolation, "no one gave us as much encouragement as New Zealand."

Donald Woods, exiled editor from East London and eminent South African, is also here, backing the South Africans, as is Steve Tshwete, of the UCBSA and the ANC, who says that, whereas he never shed a tear in his 15 years on Robben Island, he may have done so in the South African dressing-room on Wednesday.

India frustrated, page 34

Sole to retire at end of summer tour

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

DAVID Sole, once described by his coach as a model of the modern rugby union forward, will retire after Scotland's tour of Australia this summer. Next Saturday's international against France, his 41st appearance in the Scotland front row, will be his last at Murrayfield.

Sole, who will be 30 in May, made the decision after the World Cup last November to end a career which embraced the victorious 1989 tour of Australia by the British Isles and the 1990 grand slam in the five nations' championship, when he captained Scotland to a momentous win over England.

He has led Scotland more times than any other player — next Saturday will be his 22nd game in charge — and would have been a prime contender for the captaincy of the 1993 British Lions in New Zealand. But the increasing demands of rugby, the requirements of his young family and his job as a grain buyer for United Distillers in Edinburgh, determined his retirement.

Sole came to prominence with Bath and won his first cap as a loose-head prop with them in 1986. He moved to Scotland and Edinburgh Academicals, becoming national captain in 1989.

"The family has been very much a second string to what I have been doing on the rugby field," he said. "They have been very supportive, as have United Distillers, but I am to advance my career I can't be going off for six weeks every summer, plus the time off for the game in the winter and expect to take holidays."

"I still enjoy the challenge of international rugby and I will get as much of a buzz out of my 41st cap as I did from my first. The responsibilities change but the enjoyment and thrill of representing your country don't."

Nottingham have issued a statement of support for Gary Rees, their flanker, who has been charged with causing grievous bodily harm to Stefan Marty during a match against London Irish in January. "It is a measure of the club's respect for Gary that he is a welcome member of the club committee and that he will be given every possible support to maintain his justly-earned reputation of integrity, both as a person and as a rugby player."

Rees has withdrawn from today's league match against Saracens because of a damaged shoulder.

Egerton's drive, page 31
Team news, page 31

Jockey fined for post-race brawl

BY RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT

THE Radcot Handicap Hurdle at Newbury ended in spectacular style yesterday — with a brawl between two jockeys.

Billy Morris, who is also a Territorial Army reservist, head-butted Jamie Osborne in the face after an incident during the race.

Osborne lost a tooth and valets had to step in to pull apart the two riders. Morris was found guilty of improper conduct and fined £200 by the stewards after the confrontation was reported to them by Oliver Sherwood, the trainer, for whom Osborne rides.

On Scottish Grand National day in 1990, Osborne was slapped on the face in the weighing room by Jenny Pittman after a mid-race incident. The Lambourn trainer was also fined £200.

"I must have the sort of face that people like to hit," Osborne said before leaving the Berkshire course in search of a dentist.

Far from interfering with Morris and his mount, Osborne said he was trying to assist him. "He is too stupid to realise but what I was trying to do on the bend was to look after him and make sure he didn't get hampered," Morris left the course with a cut "no comment".

Rouyan, ridden by Morris, finished third in the race and Prime Minister, Osborne's mount, was unplaced.

Murray inquest, page 3

Ardiles's hopes dashed

OSSIE Ardiles's hopes of returning to football management with Bristol City were dashed when the second division club announced yesterday that there was serious opposition to his appointment at a board meeting (Clive White writes).

"The feeling was that our problems could not be solved simply by hiring a famous name," Les Kew, the club's chairman, said. He added that he was "flattered" that the Argentinean was interested in filling the vacancy brought about by the dismissal of Jimmy Lumsden.

Ardiles, who was dismissed three weeks ago by Newcastle United, has already turned down invitations to manage Plymouth Argyle and Torquay United. City have received more than 20 applications for the post.

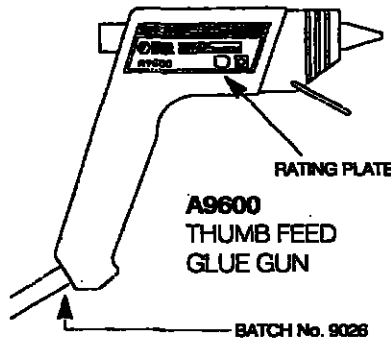
Martin O'Neill, the former Nottingham Forest and Northern Ireland international who manages Weymouth Wanderers, is thought to be among the front runners. Russell Osman, who is a Bristol City player, is another.

Pictures, page 31
More football, page 35

BLACK & DECKER SAFETY NOTICE

A9600 GLUE GUN

In the course of our continuous quality programme we have discovered a possible electrical insulation problem on a small quantity of one model within our Glue Gun range.



This notice is only relevant to one model, the A9600 Thumb Feed Glue Gun, purchased over the last 2 years, with the batch no. 9026.

To identify the product locate the rating plate on the side of the gun. Amongst other information will be the catalogue no. A9600. Assuming this is the case, look at the base of the gun where the cable joins the casing. The number stamped on the base is the batch number. Only A9600's with the batch number of '9026' are affected.

All other Black & Decker Glue Guns including A9600's with other batch numbers are totally unaffected.

If you possess a A9600 Glue Gun of batch no. 9026, please cease using it immediately and contact us at your earliest convenience.

We have set up a helpline on (Freephone) 0800 232 661 to take your calls between 9am and 5pm. Or simply call your local Black & Decker Service Centre (see Yellow Pages for details). Your cooperation in this matter is appreciated.

Bermuda breached by class

FROM RICHARD STREETON, IN HAMILTON, BERMUDA

AS THE England A team left on a 17-hour journey via New York to Barbados yesterday, Bermuda's cricketers were digesting the harsh lessons from four heavy defeats. England's brief visit brought a reminder of the gulf between gifted professionals and club players, according to Doug Ferguson, the former National Cricket Association (NCA) coach in northern England.

Ferguson is now overseeing Bermuda's efforts to improve standards. As a Northamptonshire scout, he was responsible in his NCA days for developing players like

Wiley, Geoff Cook, Bailey and Mallender for the county, an impressive record. "The difference between England and themselves has really been emphasised for Bermuda," he said.

Ferguson was impressed with the England team, which looks certain, he said, to do well in the future at the highest level. "Their quality showed in every way, with bowlers keeping a good line, batsmen playing straight and waiting for the ball to put away and consistently keen, tight fielding."

Bermudan players have possessed a full share of po-

tential, he emphasised, and there was a willingness and ability there to improve but it would take time. He was trying to instil an awareness that batsmen had to plan lengthy stays at the crease, rather than lose patience, and bowlers had to remember that it was no good bowling four good balls in an over if two others were loose and went for four.

He added that indoor facilities on the island also had to be improved and a progressive structure from under-13 level in schools through to the national side had to be established.

SIMON BARNES ON SATURDAY

Kenyans get into gear

Nairobi KENYAN athletes dominate middle and long distance running all over the world. Will the perfect training conditions, the athletics traditions, and vaulting sporting ambition inspire heroics in other sports? Yes indeed, I am told. Kenya will one day rule the world in cycling. All it needs is the lighting of the blue touch paper. Outside the towns and cities, Kenyans run to school, to work and home again, mile after mile.

Or they cycle. Generally, they ride the Chinese-made boneshakers that you find in every developing country in the world: gearless, battle-heavy and indestructible. Kenya has some cycle clubs that ride only suchbikes. But there are others who are racing exotic speedsters. Kenya is not competing

internationally because the world governing body, the International Amateur Cycling Federation, has a problem with the four-man committee of the Amateur Cycling Association of Kenya. There are moves afoot to replace these men, and thus to open the door to the rest of the world. When that happens, say bullish Kenyan bikers, the world can brace itself. Kenya winning the Tour de France? You read it here first.

Masai next

MORE bullishness. Well, Kenya is a not unbullish place in sport these days. Wait till the Masai takes up athletics. So says John Velzian, the development officer of the International Amateur Athletic Federation, for anglophone Africa. The long-limbed Masai

can run for ever. If they ever set the pace for running in circles instead of straight lines, we will have something worth watching. I am just back from the Masai Mara, in the company of a Masai with the singularly pleasant name of Simon. Simon Turasha is a man who can walk all day at an effortless 4mph. Seventy kilometers? A day's walk, he said, shrugging. Keirot Bolt? Ngugi? We ain't seen nothing yet.

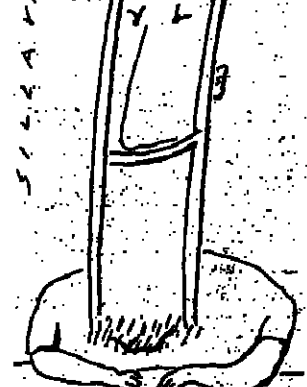
Facing a ban

RUGBY referees, David Bishop (New Zealand) and Stephen Hilditch (Ireland), have provoked the ire of the council of Moncrabeau (pop: 792) in the Lot-et-Garonne. They have been declared undesirable and a threat to public order, for being "unfair" in two recent matches lost by France. The decree has teeth. Neither can take part in the World Championship for Making Faces and the election of the King of the Lions.

Percentages

HERE are some more stunning numbers from the fabulous Swedish figures factory, Statistics Sweden. Did you know that in the last football World Cup in Italy, scheduled 90-minute matches lasted between 90 and 110 minutes, not counting half-time?

In these matches the ball was in play for between 50 and 55 minutes. In other words, nearly half a football



game is stoppages. Injuries, free kicks, throw-ins and general messing about.

Compare this with tennis. An average men's singles match lasts quite as long as a football match, but the ball is in play only half as long. In the Australian Open final, when Jim Courier beat Stefan Edberg in four sets, the match lasted 2hr 25min and the ball was in play for 26min 39sec. Or in other figures, for 83 per cent of the match, Courier and Edberg were doing things other than playing tennis. What does all this mean, I ask myself.

Deep breath

THIS column sends greetings to a magazine called Bureau of Non-League Football, which recently passed the milestone of 100 issues in its twelfth year. This gloriously esoteric publication carries results and league tables of every obscure league in existence. "We also follow the league cup competitions," the edi-

tor, Mike Ford, writes to tell me.

Now running are the Bob Lord Trophy, the Barclays Commercial Services Cup, the Isthmian League Cup, the Lotite Cup and Trophy, the NPL League Challenge Cup, President's Cup and first division Cup, Dan-Air League Cup and Elite Class Cup, Spartan League Cup, Essex League Cup, Herts League Cup, Winstonlead Kent League Cup, GM Western Les Phillips Cup, Jewson Wessex Jewson Eastern Counties, Jewson South Western League Cup, Cornwall Combination, Hellenic premier and division one cups, Northern League Cup, Bass North West Counties, Raab Karher Cup, Northern Counties East League C & W Engineering Cup...

"Plus," Ford adds vaingloriously "a few more as well." There is no doubt about it: the greatest event excites the greatest of passion.

with



☐ **Eating out:** Jonathan Meades on the demise of the bistro **Page 6** ☐ **Children:** Classroom opera takes shape for Snape **Page 8** ☐ **Gardening:** Vegetables without tears **Page 13**

FILM

AFRAID OF THE DARK (18): Mark Pepple's clever but disagreeable psychological thriller about fear and blindness. With Ben Keyworth, James Fox, Fanny Ardant. **Camden Plaza** (071-485 2443) **Canon Heymarket** (071-839 1527).

BARTON FINK (15): The Coen brothers' marvellous macabre comedy about a New York playwright all at once in 1940s Hollywood. Starring John Turturro, John Goodman. A triple Cannes prizewinner. **Gates** (071-727 4043) **Lumière** (071-836 0691) **Screen on the Hill** (071-435 3366).

BLACK ROBE (15): Seventeenth-century Jesuit (Lothare Buteau) tries to convert Indians in northern Quebec. Intelligent epic from Brian Moore's novel. Director, Bruce Beresford. **MGM Trocadero** (071-434 0031) **Plaza** (071-497 9999).

CROSS MY HEART (15): Wan, visually dull French tale of children concealing a mother's death from the authorities. With Sylvain Chabrier, director, Jacques Fansten. **Curzon Phoenix** (071-240 9661).



Reese Witherspoon: lovebird in *The Man in the Moon*

DEATH IN BRUNSWICK (15): Sam Neill as an ageing mother's boy sucked into love, violence and accidental murder. Tasty black comedy from new Australian director John Ruane. **Canon Tottenham Court Road** (071-836 5148) **Metro** (071-437 0757).

THE DOUBLE LIFE OF VERONIQUE (15): Krzysztof Kieslowski's brilliantly filmed conundrum about two girls (one Polish, one French) who seem to share a life. With Irène Jacob, Philippe Volter. **Curzon Mayfair** (071-485 8665).

FATHER OF THE BRIDE (PG): Daughter's impending wedding drives Steve Martin crazy. Disappointing remake of the 1950 classic, for audiences who want to be spoon-fed. With Diane Keaton, director, Charles Shyer. **Canon: Chelsea** (071-352 5036) **Oxford Street** (071-536 0310) **Odeons Kensington** (0426 914666) **Marble Arch** (0426 914571) **West End** (0426 915574) **Screen on the Hill** (071-792 3332).

FOR THE BOYS (15): Song-and-dance team entertain troops in three wars, only to be run by a synthetic script. With Bette Midler, James Caan, director, Mark Rydell. **Odeons Kensington** (0426 914666) **West End** (0426 915574).

FRANKIE AND JOHNNY (15): Short-order cook (Al Pacino) courts a way waitress (Michelle Pfeiffer). Synthetic adaptation of Terrence McNally's play. Director, Garry Marshall. **Canon Fulham Road** (071-370 2636) **Empire** (071-497 9999) **Whiteleys** (071-792 3332).

JFK (15): Oliver Stone's contentious, electrifying, three-hour drama about the Kennedy assassination. Kevin Costner as crusading D.A. Jim Garrison; a bustling supporting cast. **Canon: Fulham Road** (071-370 2636) **Shakespeare Avenue** (071-836 8881) **MGM Trocadero** (071-434 0031) **Plaza** (071-497 9999) **Screen on the Hill** (071-836 5148) **Whiteleys** (071-792 3332).

THE LAST BOY SCOUT (18): Bruce Willis as a world-weary detective embroiled in a corruption. Crowd-pleasing action rakes. With Damon Wayans, director, Tony Scott. **Canon: Fulham Road** (071-370 2636) **Haymarket** (071-839 1527) **Oxford Street** (071-536 0310) **MGM Trocadero** (071-434 0031) **Whiteleys** (071-792 3332).

THE MAN IN THE MOON (PG): Pangs of young love in rural Louisiana. Quiet, old-fashioned drama. Honest deep down, though wet round the edges. With Sam

Waterston, Tess Harper, Reese Witherspoon, Emily Warfield, director, Robert Mulligan. **Canon: Fulham Road** (071-370 2636) **Shakespeare Avenue** (071-836 8881) **MGM Trocadero** (071-434 0031) **Whiteleys** (071-792 3332).

MEN OF RESPECT (18): Macbeth transferred to the New York underworld: a lively enough exercise, but a stillborn movie. With John Turturro, Katherine Borowitz, director, William Reilly. **Canon Oxford Street** (071-636 0310).

MISSISSIPPI MASALA (15): Indians displaced from Uganda to Mississippi fret over race and young love. Sharp insights, but soggy at the centre. Starring Santa Choudhury, Denzel Washington. Director, Mira Nair. **Curzon West End** (071-438 4805).

THE PRINCE OF TIDES (15): New York psychiatrist helps football coach face family secrets. Romantic drama with ideas above its station, grandly acted by Nick Nolte, Barbara Streisand and co-stars, but fails to sing. **Barbican** (071-638 8891) **Canon Parkway** (071-267 7034) **Canon: Baker Street** (071-935 9772) **Chelsea** (071-352 5036) **Notting Hill Corner** (071-727 5705) **Odeons Kensington** (0426 914666) **Leicester Square** (0426 915683) **Whiteleys** (071-792 3332).

RAISE THE RED LANTERN (PG): Zhang Yimou's austere, quietly dazzling drama of a concubine's struggles in Twentieth China. With Gong Li. **Chelsea** (071-351 9742/3743) **Metro** (071-437 0757) **Renoi** (071-837 8402).

SHADOWS (18): Welcome revival of John Cassavetes's ground-breaking first feature (1959), a tapestry of New York bohemian life. Plus four other films in a two-week salute to the lively actor-director. **ICA** (071-430 3647).

LES VALSEUSES (18): Gérard Depardieu and Patrick Dewaere as two lads with wandering hearts. Timely revival of Bertrand Blier's ferocious, amoral, snook-cooking 1974 romp. **Canon Piccadilly** (071-437 3561).

THE NIGHT OF THE IGUANA: Alfred Molina and a superb Eileen Atkins in Tennessee Williams's late play on the various effects of sexual repression. **National (Lyttelton)**, South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252), Thurs next Sat, 7.30pm, mat next Sat, 2.15pm.

THE POCKET DREAM: Mike McShane and Sandi Toksvig play theatre staff who help a half-strength touring company to put on "the ultimate comic version of A Midsummer Night's Dream". **Albany, St Martin's Lane, WC2** (071-557 1115). Previews tonight, Mon, Tues, 7.45pm, opens Wed, 7pm. Then Tues-Sat, 7.45pm, mats Sat, Sun, 3pm.

THE RECRUITING OFFICER: Alex Jennings, Desmond Barri, Sally Dexter swag and scheme in Vanbrugh's vigorous comedy. **National (Olivier)**, South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252). Previews from Fri, 7.15pm; opens March 12.

THE CRACKWALKER: Opening production of the "Beyond Europe" season: Judith Thompson's study of violence in downtown Kingston, Ontario, described as "shocking and compassionate by turns". **Gate, 11 Pembroke Road, W11** (071-229 0706). Previews Wed, Thurs, 7.30pm, opens Fri, 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm.

DEATH AND THE MAIDEN: Juliet Stevenson, Michael Byrne, Bill Paterson superb in Ariel Dorfman's Chilean political drama. Best play of 1991. **Duke of York's, St Martin's Lane, WC2** (071-836 5122). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mats Thurs, 3pm, Sat, 4pm.

FROM A JACK TO A KING: Witty and stylish version of Macbeth's climb to the top, set in the world of rock bands and packed with Sixties songs. **Boulevard, Walker's Court, off Peter Street, W1** (071-437 2661). Mon-Sat, 8.15pm, Fri late show, 10.15pm, mat Sat, 6pm.

THE HOUR OF THE LYNX: Powerful Swedish drama (Edinburgh Fringe award-winner) where a disturbed boy's treatment of his cat forces his guardians to reassess their ideas of love and redemption. **Latchmere, 503 Battersea Park Road, SW11** (071-228 2620). Preview Wed 8pm, opens Thurs, 7pm. Then Mon-Sat, 8pm.

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The show must go on: Sandi Toksvig and Mike McShane help stage Shakespeare's midsummer comedy in *The Pocket Dream*

MAKING IT BETTER: James Saunders's subtle play concerned with ideals, reality and liberation in Prague and London; Jane Asher in an exemplary cast of four. **Hampstead, Swiss Cottage Centre, NW3** (071-722 9301). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Sat, 4pm.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE: Trevor Nunn's engrossing production from Stratford: David Haig fatally tempted by Claire Skinner in Freud's Vienna. **Young Vic, 66 The Cut, SE1** (071-928 6363). Previews from Fri, 7.15pm, opens March 10.

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MUSIC

CLASSICAL
FESTIVAL OF EXPRESSIONISM: The Manchester celebration begins with Schoenberg's mighty *Gurrelieder* tonight in the Free Trade Hall, when the Hall Choir and Leeds and Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus join the English Northern Philharmonia under the baton of Paul Daniels. This first crop of concerts also includes a luncheon recreation of the 100th Viennese Vereinskonzert by RNCM Commemorative, Tuesday, featuring Sarah Fulgoni reciting the Sprechstimme role in Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*. On Monday, Adrethos plays in programme under Paul McGrath of Elster, Farnborough, Webern and Schoenberg, while there are recitals by New Music Ensemble (of Goehr, Maxwell Davies, Weill and Hindemith) tomorrow and by the Lindsay Quartet (of Haydn, Berg and Schubert) on Thursday. The other arts are also well represented.

Free Trade Hall, Manchester (061-554 1712), tonight, 7.30pm. **Royal Northern College of Music** (as above), Mon, 7.30pm. **Tues, 1.10pm.** Department of Music, Manchester University (061-275 4982), tomorrow, Thurs, 7.30pm.

HILLIARD ENSEMBLE: This small group of solo voices creates a rare, transcendent intimacy in its performances. It will be intriguing to hear how John Caskin responds to his commission from them. The Polish composer Henryk Gorecki has also provided a new piece, *Concerto II*, for Christopher Bowers-Broadbent to play on the organ. **Arvo Pärt's Miserere** (written expressly for the Hilliards) and, on eight centuries back, *Pericles Magnus* opens the programme. **The Cathedral, Durham** (019-384 3720), Tues, 7.30pm. **Westminster Abbey, London** SW1 (071-928 8800), Thurs, 7.45pm. **King's College Chapel, Cambridge** (0223 352000), Fri, 7.30pm.

ROSSINI BIRTHDAY GALA: Celebrating today's bicentenary of the composer's birth, a concert performed by the City of London Sinfonia under Richard Hickox featuring extracts from Rossini operas. With the Tallis Chamber Choir and the London Symphony Chorus. Soloists include Judith Howarth, soprano, and Richard Crichton, bass. **Barbican Centre, Silk Street, London EC2** (071-638 8891), today, 7.30pm.

BARBICAN PREMIERES: The Symphony Orchestra gives the world premieres of Colin Matthews's *Broken Symmetry* and of the orchestral version of Oliver Knussen's *Whitman Settings*. David Home is the pianist and Lucy Shelton the soprano, and the new pieces are sandwiched between Sibelius's tone poem for soprano and orchestra, *Lemminkäinen*, and Scriabin's exotic *Paganini*, the Poem of Fire. **Knussen conducts.** **Barbican Centre, as above, Thurs, 7.45pm.**

QUARTET NOW PLAYING: Free luncheon series, featuring young British string quartets every week until April 8. This week the Duke Quartet plays Bartók, Dvorák and a work by Thomas Simak. **Freehall Hall Foyer, South Bank, London SE1** (071-928 8800), Wed, 12.30pm.

TOWARDS THE MILLENNIUM: The London Sinfonietta and Simon Rattle take a programme of lives (*Three Places in New England*, Satie (*Parade*), Schreker (*Chamber Symphony*) and Stravinsky (*Ragtime and Renard*) to the three principal cities involved in the 1911-1920 sector of the festival. **Sinfonietta, Birmingham** (021-212 3333), Wed, 7.30pm. **St David's Hall, Cardiff** (0222 371238), Thurs, 7.30pm. **Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, London SE1** (071-928 8800), Fri, 7.45pm.

OPERA
BARBER OF SEVILLE: The bicentenary of the birth of Rossini is celebrated with a revival of Jonathan Miller's widely praised English National Opera production of Rossini's opera, re-staged by John Abufela, in a clever translation by Amanda and Anthony Holden. Michael Lewis is Figaro, while Eirian James sings Rosina. The cast also includes Peter Brondar as Almaviva, Andrew Shore as Bartolo, and Richard Angas as Basilio. **John Kasparczyk conducts.** **Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2** (071-836 3161; cc 071-240 5256), tonight, 7.30pm.

STUDENT OPERA: Two productions are recommended this week: the Royal Northern College of Music stages Vaughan Williams's opera *The Pilgrim's Progress*, completed in 1948, conducted by Igor Kennaway and produced by Joseph Ward; and at the Guildhall School, Edward Timpa conducts Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, directed by Robert Tabbott. **RNCM, Manchester** (061-273 4504/5534), Fri, 7.15pm; with three more performances later this month. **Guildhall School of Music, Silk Street, London EC2** (071-638 8891), Wed, Fri, 7pm.

ROBERT BROWNE: The new album, *Black Eyed Man*, boasts sweet, expressive singing from Margo Timmins and haunting, occasionally morbid, lyrics from her brother Michael. **Mandela Hall, Belfast** (0232 329565), today, 7.30pm. **Dynasty Theatre, Dublin** (010 353 1 77744), tomorrow, 7.30pm. **Free Trade Hall, Manchester** (061-236 7110), Mon, 7pm. **Pavilion, Glasgow** (041-332 1846), Tues, 7.30pm. **Corn Exchange, Cambridge** (0223 463204), Wed, 8pm. **Albert Hall, London SW7** (071-588 8212), Fri, 6.45pm.

LYVE LOVETT: The innovative Texan singer-songwriter gives a one-off concert previewing his humorous but powerful new "gospel death" album, *Joshua Judges Ruth*. It's return only, but he will be back in London at the Hammermith Odeon, June 12. **Shaw Theatre, London NW1** (071-388 1394), Wed, 8pm.

JAZZ
JAN BARBAREK GROUP: Melodic, ethereal compositions from the Norwegian saxophonist back in this country for the start of the promising Silk Cut City Jazz season. **Toine Hall, Birmingham** (021-236 2362), today, 8pm. **Free Trade Hall, Manchester** (061-236 7110), tomorrow, 7.30pm. **Festival Hall, London SE1** (071-928 8800), Mon, 7.30pm. **Usher Hall, Edinburgh** (031-228 195), Tues, 8pm. **St George's Hall, Bradford** (0274 752000), Wed, 7.30pm. **Corn Exchange, Cambridge** (0223 357851), Thurs 8pm. **Victoria Rooms, Bristol** (0272 289006), Fri, 8pm.

MANON: Kenneth MacMillan's passionate ballet, based on the famous story by Abbé Prévost, makes a welcome return to the Royal Ballet repertoire. This afternoon, Dorey Bassett makes her debut as the self-destructive 18th-century French courtesan who ends up dying for love. **Zoltan Solymosi**, the dancing Hungarian who has just joined Covent Garden, partners her as Manon. **Overpowered love** Des Grieux. **Tonight, the Kirov star Alina Astymurava** dances the title role, with Laurent Hilaire from the Paris Opera Ballet. A great story, and a great ballet. **Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London WC2** (071-240 1066), tonight, Thurs, 7.30pm, mat today, 2.30pm.

MOHIC: Moses Pendleton brings his imaginative blend of acrobatics, illusion and dance to Sadler's Wells in a new work, entitled *Passion*, which features Peter Gabriel's score to *The Last Temptation of Christ*, used for the first time as a full-scale dance soundtrack. Although noted for his humour, the American choreographer promises a slightly more serious look at the fundamental human emotion of the title. **Opens on Tuesday.** **Sadler's Wells Theatre, Rosebery Avenue, London EC1** (071-278 8916), Tues-Sat, 7.30pm.

VOLTAIRE: This new chamber ballet company, which grew out of the now disbanded Dance Advance troupe, launches itself with a premiere at the Garden Centre in Brighton. The programme, called *Ballet for Sex*, features *After Ego*, a new collaboration between the saxophonist John Surman and the choreographer Jennifer Jackson. **In the Meis, choreographed by Michael Corder**, is the other new ballet on the programme. Following its Brighton debut, Voltaire plans a national tour. **Garden Centre, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton** (0273 655861), tonight, 7.45pm.

ROYAL GALA: The Princess of Wales is attending a gala performance in aid of the Benish Institute, the place where dance notations are framed. The evening of ballet, devised and produced by Wayne Sleep, will feature many Covent Garden dancers, including Dorey Bassett, Lesley Collier, Viktoria Duranile and Anthony Bowell. The performance is followed by a gala dinner in the ICI Atrium. **St John's Smith Square, London SW1** (Booking details on 071-222 2168), tomorrow, 7.30pm.

6 I shall certainly be seeing the film JFK, as I was in Dallas when Kennedy was shot. I went to the press conference in the basement of the jail where we were told that Lee Harvey Oswald had been charged with the assassination, and presumably that press conference features in the film. I met Kennedy once, and was impressed that he talked about me rather than about himself, which I thought was fairly extraordinary for a man in his position. Because I cry incredibly easily, I'm afraid I won't be able to see *The Prince of Tides*. If anything has even a few moments of sentiment in it, I don't go, because I sob. "Engineers of the Human Soul", the exhibition of Soviet Socialist Realist Painting (1930-60), at the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford sounds like something that would interest me. I go to galleries on my own, because if you go with someone else they insist on telling you what you should like, and I prefer to make up my own mind.

EXHIBITIONS

BULGARIAN ART: Britain's exploration of art from the newly democratised East continues a pace. This extraordinary show of more than 200 works by 60 artists dazzles and confuses, since the pieces it contains, some brilliantly original, some repellent kitsch, firmly refuse categorisation. There is a general feeling of time-slip, but the strongly expressionist paintings of Peter Dimov, the disturbing totems of Krassimir Arsov and the glowing semi-abstracted work of Ivan Obretenov would look good in any context. **Gagliardi, 509 King's Road, London SW10** (071-352 3683). Mon-Sat, 10am-5.30pm, opens Tues. Until May 23.

V & A MASTER PRINTS: For its latest venture into the market place, the Victoria & Albert museum, in its capacity as national collection of watercolours, has decided to put out limited editions of colotype facsimiles (made by what is thought to be the only printer in the world still using the process) of a series of masterpieces, some well known, others not seen in public for years. This one-day launch includes all the prints in the first batch, plus a unique opportunity to see the originals by artists including Constable. **Turner, Blake and Francis Burrey in a West End gallery, Roy Miles Gallery, 29 Bruton Street, London W1** (071-495 4747). Originals on show Wed 8.30am-3.30pm. Thereafter, prints displayed Mon-Fri 9am-6pm, Sat 10am-1pm. Until March 28.

DENZIL FORRESTER: At the end of a museum tour which has included Preston, Newcastle, Lincoln and Stirling, Forrester's decision to come finally to London, it is rare for so young an artist (35) to be so extensively shown, but Forrester, who comes from Granada, fully justifies it with powerful images, sometimes prismatically coloured, sometimes starkly monochromatic, reflecting his international background and his fascination with disco culture. Clearly an outstanding figure of his generation. **Agf Kato Fine Art, Boundary Gallery, Boundary Road, London NW5** (071-624 1126). Wed-Sat, 11am-6pm, opens Thurs. Until March 28.

ANDREA MANTEGNA: Since one of Mantegna's grandest works, the great series devoted to *The Triumphs of Caesar*, is part of the royal collection, London seems a logical place for the first retrospective of the painter for many years. Mantegna is unique among 15th-century Italian artists for the impression he gives of passion only just held in check by the disciplines of classical form. **Royal Academy of Arts, Piccadilly, London W1** (071-439 7436), daily, 10am-6pm, until April 5. Sponsored by Olivetti.

VAN GOGH IN ENGLAND: No, there is no great undiscovered English period in Van Gogh's painting to match the wonders of *Brabant, Paris, Arles and St. Remy*. But the time he spent in England, 1873-76, was extremely important for his subsequent development, opening his eyes to the social realist work of illustrators and of painters such as Herkomer and Fildes, as well as Gustav Doré's grim visions of contemporary London. This show fills in the background, with examples of the British art which fascinated the painter and ten important Van Gogh paintings. **Barbican Art Gallery, Barbican Centre, EC2** (071-638 4141). Mon and Wed-Sat, 10am-6.45pm, Tues, 10am-5.45pm, Sun, midday-6.45pm. Until May 4.

VINCENT'S CHAIR: Exhibited at "Van Gogh in England"

NEW DISPLAYS 1992: Under Nicholas Serota the new year (giving at the Tate is becoming an eagerly awaited annual event. What seems to have been arrived at is a happy compromise between permanent display and constantly changing exhibition. Highlights this year include rooms devoted to such subjects as the British Surrealists, Hogarth and his Circle, and Post-War Abstraction - Paris, as well as a re-examination of the British kitchen sink. **Tate Gallery, Millbank, London SW1** (071-621 1313). Mon-Sat, 10am-6.30pm, Sun, 2-5.30pm. Until early 1993.

SALEROOMS
TUESDAY: Christie's offer a collection of line-engraved envelopes, including an 1940 Victoria and Albert (up to £7,000), 11am. At the same time Bonham's have silver, including a very handsome pair of George IV bucket-shaped wine coolers (up to £15,000). Sotheby's have a large group of glass paperweights in their glass and ceramic sale, 11am and 2pm. At 1pm Christie's South Kensington have a sale of scientific instruments and tools with a notable medical collection. A repinning set is estimated at up to £2,500 and a pair of folding leather eye-glasses, circa 1750, at up to £2,000. **There is a temporary bracket clock (up to £30,000) at Phillips, 2pm.** **Christie's Kings Street, St James's, London SW1** (071-838 9000). **Sotheby's, New Bond Street, London W1** (071-493 8080). **Christie's South Kensington,**

WEDNESDAY: Sotheby's claim one of the earliest long case clocks, a splendid architectural creation by Edward East circa 1665 (up to £120,000) among their time pieces from Tompon and Quare to Rolex, 10.30am. At 11am and 2pm the same house has Victorian paintings and watercolours. In Newbury at 10.30am Drevett Neate sell paintings, prints, books and manuscripts including the cricketer archive and collection of the late Sir George "Gubby" Allen, captain of England in the 1930s. His 1968 Bentley is also on offer. **Drevett Neate, Donnington Priory, Newbury, Berkshire** (0635 31234).

Decline and fall of Red Elvis

Lynne Truss sets out to solve the mystery of the disappearing Iron Curtain rock star who filled the cold war years before glasnost

Ever since arts programmes discovered the deep hilarity of making spoof profiles, one has been deliberately wary of *Arenas* with titles such as last night's *The Incredible Case of Comrade Rockstar* (BBC2). You watch them with your head tilted back, your eyes narrowed and an "Oh yes?" resting like a bubble on your pursed lips. What's this they're expecting me to believe now? That a profoundly mediocre, dead American singer called "Dean Reed" (a clearly fictitious name) was an official megastar in the Soviet bloc for 20 years? Oh, come on guys. Get a life.

They make out that it's all true, of course. You have to hand it to them. See the clean-cut Colorado boy with the photofit face and standard-issue cowboy hat filming a Soviet-style pop video (on authentically drained colour film) singing "This Train is Bound for Glory" atop the trans-Siberian railway. Gasp as he performs "Ghost Riders in the Sky" to a delighted Yasser Arafat ("Yippee-eye-ay: yippee-eye-oh"). Thrill to his jaunty cover version of "Yellow Submarine". What do they take us for? All these witnesses are actors. I tell you. All those film-clips are clever mock-ups. Fancy calling his invented East Berlin domicile "Schmuckwitz". There was no need to rub it in.

But the truly incredible and compelling thing about this 90-minute film (based on a book by American journalist Reggie Nadelson and fronted by her in a rather drab, all-purpose mac that in the end it simply had to be true. Nobody but a real person called Dean Reed would possibly have gone to such trouble to invent this cold-war "Red Elvis" story. In a daring escape from Hollywood nonentity, Reed really did become the communist world's pet all-American dreamboat — his colourful rarity value in Brezhnev's grey concrete bloc cunningly disguising his intense ordinariness as an entertainer. And meanwhile he ensured that he was filmed and photographed to a degree that makes Madonna look shy and receive.

Dean Reed had "got a life", then, albeit fulfilling the expectations (low ones) of the Iron Curtain pop picker. A Czech singer in Argentina (a countless, disconcert-

REVIEW

ingly resembling Eric Idle in make-up) said she believed Reed had been brainwashed on a visit to Moscow; but in fact his noticeable nothing-behind-the-eyes expression actually predated the trip. In the early 1960s he lived in South America and became what Nadelson called a "political junkie" — a godsend, therefore, to a communist world in love with America. How one's heart went out to those poor Russians, deluded into thinking that Dean Reed's cover versions qualified as "rock". Such, though, is the eternal lament of the Russian people: "We ask for bread and they give us stones, we ask for the Stones, and we get Dean Reed."

Reggie Nadelson said she had been on the Dean Reed trail for years, and the fruits of this dedication were apparent. Last night's film was so thorough in its access to first-hand testimony (American friends, Russian fans, rock critics, Phil Everly) and evidence (film footage, old cowboy boots, tapes of phone calls that one was actually surprised when a Colorado archivist, in white gloves, showed us a denim's plaster cast of Dean Reed's teeth. Why no toenail clippings, we cried, why no authentic bottled body-sweat? Surely Reed kept a stock of it at home?)

As for images of Comrade Rockstar, there appeared to be zillions. Because however much the camera loved Dean Reed, it could never be half as much as he loved it back. On a trip to Colorado in 1985 he did headstands for a home movie. He performed life-endangering, anti-Pinochet songs in Chile in 1983, but made sure the cameras were turning. In the early days of his socialist leanings he attended a peace conference in Helsinki, and a marvellous film-clip showed him sitting anonymously among the delegates, all innocent and unaware. And then, when the lens drew up close, he looked straight into it and gave a coy, bleary, knock-'em-dead smile, exactly as though waking up in the arms of bliss.

This story had everything, really. If Reed had achieved no other significance in the world, he had given it an *Arena* subject that any



Rocking Russia: Dean Reed brought sound and colour into the grey Brezhnev era with his cover versions of top western hit songs

sane producer would kill for. The sheer mystery of it all! Accepting (reluctantly) that he existed, what on earth was he doing? Despite the inordinate amount of superficial record — and despite the 90 minutes of this film — there were still so many questions without answers.

What was his favourite colour, for example? Nadelson said she had set out with the intention of solving the case of Reed's death (by drowning) in 1986, but this whodunit theme encompassed scores of more complex whys, whys and hows.

After all, this was a cold war story, and the Iron Curtain cut both ways. If the poor schmucks of Schmuckwitz were innocent of Led Zeppelin, we westerners didn't know about Dean Reed, did we? Similarly, we have no idea how a

happy-as-a-pig-in-Schmuckwitz. But Reed was for once defying the official line by not being happy at all. He was in dire straits, as it were, because it was only a matter of time before the Russian people started asking for, well, Dire Straits.

Moreover, his fantastical reverse-escape schemes of returning to America had been publicly shot down in flames, when he gave a disastrous interview to the prestigious American news show *Sixty Minutes*. To sum up, then, the writing on Reed's wall said: "Yankee don't go home (because you'll be shot). But on the other hand there's not much point sticking around here either."

What was the poor country boy to do? Nadelson gave the final word to a young Russian woman student, an ex-fan, who spoke about Reed with intense Slavic seriousness, as though discussing

a figure from 19th-century Russian fiction. She was a marvellous interviewee, actually, fiercely clever and completely unreadable. Did she despise Reed, or did she still love him, as she had as a child when he had autographed the poster that hung behind her on the wall? Reed was pure idol, she said; his personality completely subsumed in the pathetic stacks of photographs he was forever distributing to fans. But he was also a genuine hero, which was why he would have killed himself. He was a man who had willed his own life, created it out of nothing, caused it to happen; and he had organised his life "the way he could not escape it". Wow. A real modern-day tragic hero, with a real moral message for us all: don't hitch a ride on the trans-Siberian railway if you don't want to end up in Vladivostok.

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PREVIEW

Screen Two: Truly Madly Deeply

(tomorrow, BBC2, 10pm)
The trouble with Anthony Minghella's awards-sweeping *Truly Madly Deeply* is that it sets a standard of emotional truth and clarity so subtly high that everything around it looks stale, flat, tawdry and obvious.

Truly Madly Deeply was written for television in the first place and, plausibly, may be even more affecting on the small screen than on the big one. It is certainly the event of the Screen Two season thus far, with outstanding performances from Juliet Stevenson and Alan Rickman, and a singularly cathartic effect on virtually everyone who sees it. Don't bother with the proverbial box of tissues, by the way; just knot a bath towel around your neck, and turn up the volume to drown your sobs.

J'Accuse: Laurence Olivier

(Tuesday, Channel 4, 9pm)
J'Accuse is that very variable slot in Channel 4's arts programme *Without Walls*, in which cultural icons — Virginia Woolf, the Mozart industry, *Coronation Street* — are publicly flayed by a commentator incensed (pardon the point of rage) by the silliness of their subject's over-inflated reputation.

So here is Russell Davies tackling a real biggy: did Laurence Olivier's legendary "technique" actually amount to acting, or was it more like showing off? Ouch. "He brandished it like a kind of stylistic alibi," Davies says. "In catching the eye, he frequently disengaged the brain." I know precisely what he means. I only hope he uses Olivier's book, *On Acting*, as part of his case for the prosecution — an unabashed hymn to the virtues of "getting the nose right" if ever there was one.

Roseanne

(Friday, Channel 4, 10pm)
In a recent item on *Did You See?* American viewers were shown watching *Are You Being Served?* on the public TV channel. "What do you like about it?" they were asked. "I like the way the characters have a common enemy," one woman said, interestingly. In American comedy, she said, the characters just snipe at one another all the time.

Well, they certainly do in *Roseanne* — which returns with a new series this Friday (yippee). But on the other hand, in *Roseanne* you don't see the jokes lumbering towards you from 30 feet away. In the new series, daughter Becky is now 17 and on the verge of sleeping with the deadbeat boyfriend, Mark. Dan is running his motorcycle shop. It may not sound very much, but for Connor family fans it is all too exciting for words.

L.T.

Sex and the middle classes

Sir Peter Hall makes his TV drama directing debut with a Mary Wesley best-seller

Oliver is 19 and just back from the brutal fighting in the Spanish civil war. On a moonlit night on the eve of the second world war, he leads his four cousins in a traditional breakneck "terror run" along a treacherous coastal path in Cornwall. He is perfumed of heights, but even more afraid to show it.

In Mary Wesley's *The Camomile Lawn*, a breathless novel of sex and love and the uprooting experience of war, real emotions are hidden beneath a cheery veneer. The light touch with which this is achieved was enough to convince Sir Peter Hall that this should be his debut piece of drama direction for television. The glossy £3.5 million four-part series starts on Thursday on Channel 4.

"That English convention of not showing your feelings, even to your nearest and dearest, doesn't mean there are no feelings," Hall says. "And that is what Mary Wesley catches so wonderfully: the turbulence under the stiff upper lip."

Hall's celluloid ventures are more rare than his work in the theatre and opera. Here he directs a cast of young actors as the cousins — Oliver, Walter, Polly, Calypso, Sophy and their friends; Virginia McKenna and Claire Bloom are among the established stars w/ playing the characters' sexual experiences and the zeal of youth, the series follows the cousins' intertwining lives and loves during the five years after the outbreak of war and their reunion in 1944 at a funeral.



Close encounter: director Sir Peter Hall and author Mary Wesley on the set of *The Camomile Lawn*

In wartime London houses and a sumptuous Cornish setting, the action is both racy and spirited, while lighting on moments of conflict and despair.

"I feel passionate about classical film making," Hall says. "What I was trying to do was to compose shots out of the life of the actor, not to cut everything hysterically."

He was also determined to take on the understated, slightly self-indulgent humour that encapsulates the wit of Mary Wesley.

"A lot of the comedy relates to talking about really painful and dreadful emotional experiences in an extremely dry and underplayed way," he says. "The danger is that unless you feel the emotions it becomes a silly cliché. We rehearsed the emotional melodrama of the piece and then covered it up. In that way it becomes funny and rather painful."

The book was adapted for television by Ken Taylor, who previously dramatised *The Jewel in the Crown*. With selective inci-

sions, he has produced a script so close to the original that it inevitably concerns itself with Wesley's other much-touted preoccupation — sex. The book, according to Hall, is all about sex.

He describes it as "a very un-English celebration of the importance of sex, not in a steamy D.H. Lawrence kind of way, but bluntly saying that if you're not happy in bed you're not likely to be happy outside it. That's the wonderful trick here. Calypso has been happy in bed all her life, while the entire family thought she'd married him [Hector Grant] for his money."

Calypso, the giddy, voluptuous character at the centre of the story, is played by Jennifer Ehle when young, and by her real-life mother, Rosemary Harris, when in her fifties. Hall has used a variety of conventions to create the sense of continuity as the action moves backwards and forwards in time and place.

There is an astonishingly fresh-faced and confident interpretation of the character of Sophy, the youngest cousin, aged ten, from Hall's eight-year-old daughter Rebecca. At her age, Hall says he was experiencing the start of the war in which Sophy gets so caught up. In Wesley's version the experience was one of separations and loneliness, as well as excitement, urgency and opportunities.

For Hall it was a similar blend of thrill and emptiness. "I was about to be nine when the war broke out and I remember London very vividly. I was aware of this quality of the city being closed down and of empty streets, but also of parties going on behind dark windows."

The four-part dramatisation starts just as Hall returns from working in New York. "To me," he says, "English people have always been extremely emotional, not to say eccentric. I think they need a stiff upper lip."

KAY MARLES

Missing without cause

Is Billy Dunne alive or dead? A new Channel 4 documentary joins the hunt for him

At 10am on June 22 1987, Billy Dunne left home to drive into central Dublin to buy a birthday present for his ten-year-old son. His family has not seen or heard from him since.

When he disappeared Mr Dunne, an apparently successful building contractor, became one of the 180,000 people reported missing each year in the British Isles. Most of them eventually turn up safely, usually within 48 hours; a few are discovered dead, usually through natural causes. But there are about 2,000 people a year whose whereabouts cannot be accounted for. Of these, 400 are middle-aged men like Mr Dunne, whose disappearance is examined in the Channel 4 documentary, *Looking For Billy* (Monday, 9pm).

The producer, David Batt, became interested in the fate of missing people last year after being involved in making the documentary *Death of a Runaway*, about a young girl who was found brutally murdered.

"The police," he explains, "divide missing people into 'vulnerable' and 'non-vulnerable', and tend to concentrate on looking for vulnerable — like juveniles, the ill and the mentally ill — and where there is a suspicion of foul play."

"Few young people completely disappear, because police resources and time are spent on looking for them. As for the non-vulnerable, particularly middle-aged men, the police — though they would deny this — simply satisfy themselves that the person hasn't committed suicide or been bump-



Hunted: Dunne, with son Peter

ed off, and tend to leave it at that."

Some men disappear because of another woman, money problems or career stress. But none of these seems to apply to Mr Dunne. When he disappeared he was aged 52, married for 29 years and the father of ten children. He also left behind an ageing mother, who has since died. He was not a gambler, rarely drank, had no obvious financial problems and he took nothing with him — no extra money, not even his car.

The police were satisfied that, though his car was found parked by the river Liffey, he had not been murdered or committed suicide.

The only possible explanation his family could accept was his health. Two years before he disappeared he had suffered a stroke, which left him depressed and with his left arm temporarily paralysed. Also, around the time of his disappearance, his wife, Cora, remembers him complaining of headaches and memory lapses. "I thought he would be found

slumped in the car, that he had had another stroke," she says.

Mr Batt became aware of Mr Dunne's case after using Channel 4's teletext Link-Up service to ask people who had missing, middle-aged relatives to get in touch. Among the many replies was one from Mr Dunne's eldest daughter, Beatrice Connolly. "It was passionate and eloquent," he recalls. "It seemed such an extraordinary story. It also struck me that the family had pulled out every stop to find him. They were convinced he was still alive and well, which was important."

The family's efforts to find him involved search parties of up to 300 local people combing Dublin's hotels, hospitals, pubs and stations. His picture appeared in the newspapers and on television.

Five months ago, the documentary team brought in Derek Nally, a former policeman turned private detective, to join the search. Mr Nally is convinced that sightings of Mr Dunne on Jersey in the autumn of 1989 are genuine. His view is that Mr Dunne is in hiding and has no desire to be found.

For Mrs Connolly there is still hope. "This film really is a last chance," she says. "Maybe somebody, somewhere knows where he is and will contact us. We just want to know if he's alive and well."

ANWAR BATI

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GUILTY SECRETS: DAVID BADDIEL

"I AM a total television addict. I've watched *Neighbours* since day one. I'm able to talk about people who are not in the show any more, like Darius Perkins, who played Scott before Jason Donovan took over. I watch *Going for Gold* because it's fascinating to see a programme so obviously designed as part of a national conspiracy to make us look more intelligent than the rest of Europe. The English contestants have an unfair advantage because they speak the language that the questions are asked in."

David Baddiel stars in the new series of *The Mary Whitehouse Experience* (Monday, BBC2, 9pm)

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Fretwork can be dangerous

Like 1966, the headmaster of my school stood in front of the sixth-form pupils and delivered a tirade. Sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll, he preached (though not using these particular words), were driving our morals and education down to the gates of hell.

What was I to say? I was using the woodwork class to build an electric guitar, styled to resemble an instrument designed and played by Bo Diddley. I had seen the photographs on the sleeve of an album called *Go Bo Diddley*. This guitar, white with a small rocket inlaid beneath the strings, thrusting in weird, neo-Futurist angles and curves, had transformed my beliefs about the way a musical instrument could look.

"I play the guitar as if I was playing a drum," is Diddley's explanation of his unique sound. The guitar shape may have changed my appreciation of form and function, but Bo's music adjusted my views on just about everything else. "You're absolutely right, headmaster," I murmured, as he thundered into the final straight of his harangue.

One of the most impressive guitarists I witnessed at that time was Steve Cropper, a rakishly thin man wearing an anachronistic greasy hairdo, a shiny suit and a Fender Telecaster guitar. As part of Booker T. and the MGs, Cropper was adding his singing, economical fills to the singing of Otis Redding at Hammersmith Odeon.

The greasy hair, the suit and Otis Redding have all gone, but Cropper still recalls the lofty artistic ambitions which led him to the electric guitar. "The number one reason why the guitar has been the number one instrument," he claims, in a television documentary called *Guitar Legends* (BBC 2,

The electric guitar has transformed popular music in the past 40 years.

David Toop accepts part of the blame

tonight), "is because if you're good at it you can get the girls."

The electric guitar is inextricably linked to the sound of rock, the mythology of rock, even the sexual habits of rock. We know this simply because we have been told so many times. There is, of course, a counterclaim to be made on behalf of the electric bass, and its role as the cornerstone of moral collapse and musical upheaval during the past 35 years. But only a masochist could contemplate the prospect of interviewing an hour's worth of bass players.

Everybody loves to hear about guitars, or so guitarists believe. "No matter what you play on the guitar it sounds great," says Les Paul in *Guitar Legends*. Here speaks a man who had his right arm permanently re-set in a guitar playing position after a car accident. He more or less invented the thing, so we can excuse his selective deafness. For the non-partisan remainder of humanity, the guitar is not so unimpeachable.

If a Marlin fell to earth and requested a definition of the electric guitar, the simplest response would be that it is a bit of old wood, lashed with wire, with which we express our innermost feelings as loudly as possible. One undeniable fact about the electric guitar is that it introduced noise to popular music.

Some of the earliest rock soloists — Link Wray, Paul Burlison or Bo Diddley — grasped that option with flying piecrums. Valves hummed and exploded, speaker cones shattered, and strings snapped in the pursuit of cacophony.

At the first club gig I ever attended, a guitarist named Eddie Phillips from the Creation attacked his guitar with a violin bow. This was more shocking than anything that Nigel Kennedy has since perpetrated and certainly more influential. Following close behind the revelation of the violin bow, I saw Jimi Hendrix using his guitar to push a tower of amplifiers out of a pub window. Then I saw various famous musicians smashing and burning their instruments and a blues guitarist named Earl Hooker playing with his teeth. Now that's what I call music.

Taking a personal claim within this tradition, I covered the strings of a Fender Esquire in electrician's crocodile clips and played it with a jagged hunk of timber, during a Radio 3 broadcast presided over by the late George MacBeth. This could have been a reaction against the prevailing trend of the early Seventies, as guitarists lost their minds to the execution of rapid scales. Yet did it also touch upon another, more sinister aspect of guitar mythology?

Guitar Legends is a documentary packed full of men. Some are bald and fat. Others wear leather jackets and ripped jeans. Most of them discuss guitars in the unhealthy, fixated way they may once have used to discuss women.

Men worship electric guitars. They love to own them, collect them, decorate them, talk about them to the point of distraction,



Archetype: Bo Diddley, playing one of his famously idiosyncratic guitars, in the mid-1950s

buff and polish them, lock them in metal cases, abuse them with foreign objects. This sort of behaviour is actually rather odd. As one musician points out, nobody gives names to their synthesizers. Guitarists not only name their guitars, some have been known to sleep with them. George Harrison once owned one that gently wept, or so it was said.

"You don't have to feed it much," jokes B.B. King. There is something of a devil's contract in all this. Guitars also appeal to the male drive for hierarchies and compulsive order. A recent issue of *Rolling Stone* magazine was emblazoned

with the headline: "Jimi Hendrix — the greatest guitarist of all time." Such fanousness is hard to comprehend unless you subscribe to the notion that music is like motor racing without a finishing line.

Holding up the disjointed, flashy music of guitarists such as Steve Vai and Joe Satriani as the brave new future of the electric guitar, *Guitar Legends* never quite silences a background chorus of doubt. Surely the electric guitar has passed its peak. Unless women decide, en masse, to subvert the masculine definitions of guitar playing, what hope can there be for the instrument? This is the age of

electronics rather than electricity.

Guitarists are a defensive, stubborn lot, however. A recent cover of *New Musical Express* showed the inoffensive synthesizer duo from Leeds, LFO, smashing an acoustic guitar. Readers set their jaws and put pens to paper. "We don't need these wretched bands who have no musical talent," wrote Ted from Rutland. "Their burning and trashing guitars just sums up how stupid these people are." Had he lived, Hendrix would have been most amused to hear that.

● *Guitar Legends* is broadcast on BBC 2 tonight at 10.30pm

On the 200th anniversary of Rossini's birth, John Higgins reviews the latest productions of the composer's work, on stage and on disc

Slapstick does not smack of authenticity



Minx: Rosina (Eirian James) in *The Barber of Seville*

ENGLISH National Opera's *Barber* begins with a few characters not normally found in Rossini. Pantalone leads on his players: Harlequin, Colombine and even a bemused old bear. They roll up again at the close, when the bear executes a few shuffling steps. What happens in between in Jonathan Miller's 1987 production, now re-staged by John Abufaria, is also knockabout stuff. There are one or two good jokes, but too many that are mere pratfalls. Farce was never Dr Miller's forte.

The cast, all new to the Coliseum *Barber*, dutifully go along with the cutesy-pie approach and they all antic-

late splendidly the very singable translation of the Holdens, Amanda and Anthony. But only one understands the true art of timing and comedy, and that is Andrew Shore as Dr Bartolo. Here he seems also to be a doctor of chemistry, as his test tubes fizz and fume during the lengthy aria "A un dottor" or "To an eminent physician", as it becomes here.

Shore handles with equal skill words, chemicals and music. The last named is not easy, and Rossini was forced to compose another and simpler alternative aria. Shore rumbles around the stage with many a querulous aside,

most of them to himself, and this rich characterization is what makes the evening worth the price of admission.

The rest is too routine, played and sung on an uncomfortably superficial level. Michael Lewis tries very hard to bring the house down with "Largo al factotum", but the rafters remain intact. His toothy Figaro has its moments, notably when the barber hides in one of Bartolo's

china cabinets to overhear the plans to marry Rosina. Eirian James makes that ward a bit of a blonde minx, too knowing to have spent so much of her life locked up by Bartolo. Her mezzo has a nice dusky hue to it at the bottom of the register but is apt to harden at the top.

From the start Jonathan Miller's concept made it difficult to produce a credible Almaviva — or perhaps it was because no credible Almaviva was around that he turned to *commedia dell'arte*. Patrick Power originally made him a whey-faced lover. Peter Bronder now offers a plump, almost portly Almaviva unlikely to strike Rosina as the

most desirable thing in town. The scene as the disguised music master goes well enough, but the voice lacks tenor sweetness and the delivery too often has a staccato, Kalashnikov quality.

By contrast Richard Angas's Basilio needs more vocal force and more suggestion that the man is a hypocrite first and a teacher second.

Jack Kaspzyk in his house debut was too noisy a conductor, allowing excessive foreground sounds from his brass and percussion. Rossini, a fastidious man, would probably have liked a less coarse celebration of his birthday today.

sung by Ernesto Palacio, who makes it clear that the Rossini hallmark was there from the start, a point that is expertly underlined by Rizzi himself.

From Glyndebourne comes a reminder of where the whole Rossini revival began as far as Britain was concerned — in the hands of Vittorio Gai. Back in the early Fifties the Italian conductor introduced us first to *La Cenerentola*, then to *Le Comte Ory*, with casts he was careful to hand-pick himself. Juan Oncina, suave of tenors despite one or two suspect high notes, was the cornerstone. Sari Barabas was a non-pareil Countess Adele in *Ory*. Marina de Gabarain a little less successful in the title role of *Cenerentola*. When the turn came of the *Barbiere*, Luigi Alva took over and Victoria de los Angeles replaced Glyndebourne's Rosina. The result remains one of the best available versions of the opera. All three are out on CD this month, a testament to the power of the ensemble — and to Gai.



Ry Cooder: restrained

that has greeted Little Village's visit to Britain — displayed a touching and decidedly palpable disappointment at the secondary role selected by their retiring hero in the evening's proceedings.

Sighs of relief accompanied each tasteful foray up and down the neck of his Fender guitar, and howls of approbation greeted the ever-boyish player's vocally ragged but otherwise gloriously assured romp through the set's one concession to his own back catalogue, the always-enjoyable "Little Sister".

But with Keltner all but obscured by his dark glasses and drum kit, and the silver-haired Lowe adopting the cheesy, thankless role of MC, this was inevitably Hatt's evening. All four players may have had a hand in writing Little Village's material, but its best moments — a wonderful "Big Love" or the clumsily titled, but otherwise adroit "Don't Think About Her When You're Trying To Drive" — succeeded because of the singer-songwriter's own particular gift.

Elsewhere and throughout what was undoubtedly most of the performance, one struggled to avoid the conclusion that rarely can such ordinary songs have been performed with the grace and finesse brought to them by these four richly-talented men.

ALAN JACKSON

Celebrations on the record

Rossini Heroines: Bartoli, Felice Orch./Marin, Decca 436 075-2
Rossini Arias: Ramey, WNO Orch./Ferro, Teldec 9031 73242-2
Rossini and Meyerbeer: Hampson/Parsons, EMI CDC 754436-2
Rossini: Unpublished Arias, Palacio, Bratislava Symphony Orch./Rizzi, Akademia CDAK 109.
Rossini: *La Cenerentola*, La Comte Ory, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, EMI CMS 7 64183-2, CMS 7 64180-2, CMS 7 64182-2 (each 2 CDs)

One of the best pieces in a thoughtfully satisfying disc is an aria from a little known cantata *Le nozze di Tei e di Peleo*, which was to become a number (almost always cut) for Almaviva in the *Barbiere* before ending up as the closing scene of *Cenerentola*.

Without Samuel Ramey to hand it is doubtful whether some of the revivals of Rossini's serious operas in our time would have got off the ground. Ramey, too, turns to *germanide* and the majestic aria for Assur, a "mad scene" which for once is allotted to a bass rather than a soprano. Otherwise he draws mainly from the comic repertoire, starting off with Lord Sidney's extended scena from *Viaggio*. A pity he is not here to sing the role at Covent

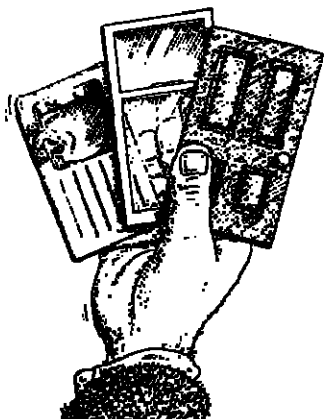


Rossini: well served
Garden in the summer. Ion Marin and Gabriele Ferro provide excellent orchestral backing for Bartoli and Ramey respectively. Thomas Hampson contents

himself with a piano for his Rossini songs. But there are few better hands to be in than those of Geoffrey Parsons. Hampson's chosen territory is mainly late Rossini and includes some of the songs he wrote for Olympe Pellissier, the woman who replaced Isabella Colbran in his life. But the comic items include the almost noisome "Chanson du Bébé", sung by an infant in instant need of nappy attention. Meyerbeer shares this disc.

Carlo Rizzi, the best of the young generation of Rossini conductors, concerns himself with rather more serious matters and some of the composer's earliest arias which only now see the light of day again. Three of them Rizzi has edited himself. All are neatly

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THE SUNDAY TIMES
Tara Fitzgerald plays Polly — calm and innocent on the surface, but with the sex drive of a hardened Riviera playboy lurking beneath. Steamy scenes are nothing new for Fitzgerald: "I don't see nude scenes as anything to be embarrassed about."
Tara Fitzgerald, star of TV's *The Camomile Lawn*, profiled in *The Sunday Times* Television & Radio guide tomorrow
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Ah! Bistro, 1990s style

Once proud to be humble, cheap and copious, today's bistro is likely to be quite the reverse, Jonathan Meades says

The etymology of the word bistro (or bistrot) is buried at the bottom of an unclarified stock. It may derive from a word which signified a dance hall, or from another which was a Russian exhortation to speed (of service). Again it may come from a term that means brown going on black, in which case a bistro is as specific a type as the brown bars of Amsterdam. Or was such a specific type. Today's Paris bistro is no more likely to conform than its London ape.

Oh, the pity! There are areas of life where extreme moderates long for consensus. The bistro (it) is one. Humble, ancient, cheap, copious, undiscovered by Sir Terence Conran. You should be so lucky. Today's bistro is just a genre of (highish) class restaurant where the absence of trappings may or may not be reflected in the cost. Any outfit connected with a dance hall/disco/freemove rap or acid house party (if they still have those) is, mercifully, outside this column's bounds. Speed — the temporal quality rather than the amphetamine — is taken care of by the fast food industry. But brown restaurants aren't.

La Bouche is cheapish. Because it's in South Kensington and near to the Lyceum, near to the French Institute and not far from the French embassy, it's got bistro cred. Further, the menus on the window are in the looping, conformist hand that has graced immemorial panes all over France, but especially those close to the grand termini in Paris (avoid). Inside it's all parchment colour walls and wood tables and amnesia about just how awful it was the last time you stepped into such a joint near the Gare de l'Est. The cooking is authentically cruddy. I should say at this point that French people eat here, which proves that an Indian or Chinese restaurant full of Indians and Chinese is not necessarily any good. The idea that nationality and palate are linked is a banal one.

This joint offers pig's trotter, pot au feu. These are not common-place items. But then hope's balloon is punctured with a three-inch nail. The trotter looks like something dredged from Dennis Nilsen's drains. It is at least visually arresting. Pot au feu comprised undercooked vegeta-

bles with two slices of tough beef in a broth whose flavour was, exclusively, that of cloves. Cheese: indifferent. Pear tart: well, let us say, mature. Oysters are untouched by the kitchen and just the ticket. Snails in garlic butter were OK. The service is confused; speed is not among its more obvious attributes. The set menus begin at under £5 — so it's hardly astonishing that the place is packed. I have, however, eaten better (and cheaper) in French student canteens.

Les Associés is a very different kind of f, though its external appearance is a gaudy legend above a "Touss or MFI frontage — presents little, and its site — the lower slopes of Muswell Hill — not much more. And the interior? Your average design-conscious telly person would sooner be anywhere but. By chance I had two such creatures in tow. Ms Anita Lowenstein stated, emphatically, that she had never previously been to Crouch End, implied that she had never heard of it, suggested that she was sort of sullied by being dragged to this northern post of savagery: she is a native of Swiss Cottage. Mr David Turnbull, who manages to produce and direct such tiffy items as *A B-Road in Britain* (Fotherington-Thomson writers on about pretty hedgerow flowers) and *A Broad in Britain* (transverse tart meets lorry drivers — that one), gleefully pointed out that Dennis Nilsen had lived nearby and that we should, thus, watch out when eating meat.

Mr Turnbull then got hold of the wine list: I should explain that this oenophilic creature only does telly when there is no wine auction to attend, no Yapp catalogue to read, no bottle to be tried for year/fruit/tannin/nose. Yet he and his friend Jules Lagrange, the legendary former salad critic of *Sud-Ouest*, get an awful lot of work done. Grape-help? Doubtless. This wine list, which I briefly glanced at, is posh for a bistro. It's authentically French in that it's all French, ill chosen, avariciously marked up.

Otherwise this is a rather good restaurant of its kind. Its conservatism is definitely French: it conserves the practice of using raspberry vinegar where a hipper, trendier British kitchen would use balsamic. The salad thus dressed



included foie gras and (slightly overcooked) duck meat. Avocado and prawns are given a spot of spin: the fruit is diced and well dressed with lemon and olive oil, the prawns are lightly bound with an unidentifiable mayo-like liaison, the whole is presented like Archibald's idea of a pineapple. Scallops are served sliced with a well made orange sauce. Bistro cooking? Not exactly — but everything so far was better than it might sound. Fancy was apparent but flavour was never neglected.

Main courses: duck confit is served with a grenadine sauce. All I know about grenadine is that I hate its bitterness, associate it with the gentian infused Suez which, in

turn, I associate with fascist *piéds noirs* (see Alistair Horne's *A Savage War of Peace*). Or don't see, since that magisterial historian never mentions the drink they drank.) Grenadine comes from pomegranate, and according to Mr Turnbull — now on his eighth bottle of Chateau La Blague '85 doesn't go with confit/corned duck. "Well wrong Jon," he said, lifting his head.

The confit itself is spot on, properly fat, properly brown outside. The others at the table ate beef rib — done only for two. I thought this really good: beefy beef, chewy going on tough, fab just etc. Pretty close to high grade home cooking. The veg with it

included a stiff "individual" quail of gratin potatoes and a pointless micro dish of egg elevated purée (carrot and turnip) plus bits of courgettes and cauliflower on a separate plate. The cheeses included a properly smelly Munster. The sweets include a St Emilion au chocolat, a tart tatin and a nougat glace.

La Bouche:
56 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 (071-589 1919)
Lunch and dinner every day, £60. See lunch and dinner, £20.

Les Associés:
172 Park Road, London N8 (081-346 8944)
Lunch Wed to Fri, dinner Tues to Sat, £60 plus.

JONATHAN MEADES'S RESTAURANT GUIDE

Marks — up to a maximum of ten — are awarded for cooking and although they are intended to reflect value for money they are not determined by this consideration alone: certain very costly restaurants are very good, certain very cheap ones are, too. All prices given are approximate — they are for a three-course meal for two, including modest wine and an aperitif. Dishes are mentioned only as an indication of the repertoire. Never be afraid to complain. Phone first. It is not only discourteous but illegal to dishonour bookings that goes for restaurants as well as customers. J.M.

ITALIAN

Riva
169 Church Road, Barnes, London SW13 (081-748 0434)
An unmitigated delight: very good Italian cooking at reasonable prices. Flavours are pungent and the accent is rustic, but there is nothing coarse about it. Bruschetta avoids the usual cliché; cel is done with edible polenta and a splendid tomato, olive and caper sauce; slabs are served with butter beans and a wine reduction; pappardelle are sautéed with dried mullet roe, saffron and scallops; squid ink risotto is exemplary; the vegetables are first rate — cold spinach with olive oil, potatoes roasted with garlic, braised fennel. Attentive and friendly service, decent wines at decent prices. £55 plus. Lunch Sun-Fri, dinner every day.

Dell Arte
116 Knightsbridge, London SW1 (071-225 3512)
Neo-Festival of Britain design, similarly modish cooking. The kitchen has lots of ideas, but too many of them fail to come off. Cotechino with lentils is OK, and so is polenta with mince — although it looks nasty. Italian wines at reasonable prices, £58. Lunch and dinner every day.

Osteria Antica Bologna
23 Northcote Road, London SW11 (071-874 4771)
Cramped, staid, all-wood outfit that serves a number of rare (and inexpensive) wines from such regions as Calabria and Emilia-Romagna, and a

long, varied menu of recondite dishes: lamb cooked in milk, goat stewed with tomato, sardines with raisins and pine nuts, pumpkin fried with mint. Despite the place's name, most of these dishes are of southern inspiration. £40 plus. Lunch every day, dinner Mon-Sat.

Pizzeria Condoti
4 Mill Street, London W1 (071-499 1308)
Bustling smart place hung with indistinct 1970s photos. Well-made pizza. Drink: Peroni beer or champagne, there's little between to bother with. With the latter £45. Lunch and dinner Mon-Sat.

Pisocchio's
160 Everholt Street, London NW1 (071-388 7482)
Tiny black and white Italian place in the westland north of Euston. The cooking has its ups and downs but the simpler dishes are worth trying. £50. Lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat.

Oste
27 Wellington Street, London WC2 (071-240 5269)
Fashionable basement done out to look like Milan or Turin of the early 1950s. Among the top Italian places in London. Most dishes are of Piedmontese or Lombardian provenance: sweetbreads with shallots, chicken with olives and tomatoes. It successfully combines rusticity with refinement. The attention to detail is great. Service is by male models. Interestingly enterprising Italian wines. £60 plus. Lunch and dinner every day.

CHINESE

The Peking
217 Willesden High Road, London NW10 (081-459 2297)
This was the first Pekingese restaurant in Europe, founded by a sometime chef from the Chinese embassy in Portland Place. The décor seems to have remained unchanged since the early 1960s, when it must already have looked pretty old hat. The cooking is good. The menu — dumplings, crispy duck, beef with black bean sauce — is now pretty much standard. £40. Lunch and Sun. Dinner Tues-Sun.

Cheng Du
9 Parkway, London NW1 (071-485 8058)
Modern, westernised Pekingese place in the centre of Camden Town. The service is well intentioned and so is the cooking, but nothing has seen less with soy and ginger seems to be out of the ordinary — that dish however is very good indeed. £60. Lunch and dinner every day.

Hsing
451 Edgware Road, London W2 (071-402 0904/0983)
The menu is gratifyingly pretentious, the vaguely 1930s art-deco design suggests more style than content. But the cooking is accomplished in an occidentalised way — this is modern Chinese cooking as pioneered at the

Zen restaurants. Crispy duck is a superior quack, Pekingese tripelets are excellent, there's a novel and interesting dish of mixed fish in ginger and wine, the black bean sauce is as good as you'll find. However, some signs of negligence are also in evidence — for instance, very burnt noodles. The service is efficient, if off-hand. £40. Lunch and dinner Mon-Sat.

Mr Chow
151 Knightsbridge, London SW1 (071-589 7347/8656)
A period piece. This was the first "upmarket" Chinese restaurant and to some extent apes the trappings of its period, the late 1960s. The food is merely a step up from a provincial chop suey house of the early 1960s. The place no longer pulls beautiful people, but relies upon ignorant Knightsbridge hotel guests who don't know that they could eat four times as well for a quarter the price in Soho. The prices are daring: £84. Lunch and dinner every day.

The Park Inn
6 Wellington Terrace, London W2 (071-229 3553)
Europeanised Chinese cooking. Three sorts of feast, half a dozen set dishes. Off the peg sino-tasteful interior. The kitchen's ideas are better than its results, but given that the former are grand and off the latter are OK. £47. Lunch and dinner every day.

KIND FOOD: ALISON JOHNSON

No more pigging it in the sty

Things are getting better for Britain's pigs. And about time, too. During the 1970s and 1980s, virtually all pork and bacon sold here, with the exception of some small-scale production at the top of the quality and price range, came from systems that were cruelly intensive.

The most efficient way of turning pigs into cheap meat is to keep them indoors and as near as possible immobile, so that they don't use up food exercising or keeping warm; on concrete or slats, without bedding; topped up with drugs to prevent disease.

That is what the pig industry did, and to a large extent still does. But there are hopeful signs. Last year the government announced the phasing out of the infamous tie-stall for pregnant sows, in which breeding sows spend about 40 weeks a year unable to turn, standing on a grating. This change could mean that the writing is on the wall for other cruelties, such as the farrowing pen, in which the sow is pinned during birth and lactation so that she can't squish the piglets, and so that they have constant access to her nipples.

Forward-looking pig farmers are turning to alternative systems, where sows are loose housed, and porkers reared on straw instead of concrete. I saw such a system on Cranswick Mills' farms in Yorkshire. Breeding animals are outdoors, able to socialise, and each has a straw-filled house in which to farrow.

After weaning, piglets are reared on in airy bays. Automated feeding stations and plenty of straw bales to dismantle ensure aggression is not a problem, so these porkers do not suffer the often-perpetrated mutilations of tail-docking, tooth pulling and castration. If they do get bored and turn to vandalism, stress balls — red, rattling footballs — are chucked in for them to play with. At no stage are growth promoters or routine drugs used.

Cranswick Mills is delighted with the efficiency of its "welfare" pig production, which though kind to pigs is not unkind to pig farmers. Its standards, though exacting, are achievable by mass producers, albeit at a somewhat higher price to the consumer. However, if a demand grows for kinder



pigment in what are known as "value added" products — pies, pâté, etc — this would narrow the present price differential. At the moment, only the best cuts can command a premium price.

On the subject of price, I was horrified to learn that, in a survey of shoppers, many who claimed to be concerned about welfare had bought Dutch or Danish pig products — conveniently cheaper — "believing" that these were more humane than British, and that the recent British bill to phase out tie-stalls for sows was merely intended to bring us up to the European mark. Not at all: Britain is way ahead on pig welfare.

Welfare-conscious farmers and buyers from The Netherlands, Denmark and Germany are coming to the UK to see how we do things. Indeed, after a poor year for pigs on the Continent in 1991, they are beginning to want to buy British pork, whereas formerly interest was limited to buying live young pigs to be finished abroad.

If it took off this trade would be very beneficial, since developing the technology and profitable markets necessary for a meat trade with Europe is vital to cut down on the dreadful business of live animal transport. Perhaps Brits abroad could start demanding British crackling pork, rather than Watney's Red Barrel.

The farms I saw supply Sainsbury's with pork for its Tenderloin range and Butcher's Choice sausages. British rindless back and streaky bacon from this high-welfare system will

begin to appear in Sainsbury's stores shortly.

Most of the other supermarkets offer similar "welfare" pig meat, under a confusing array of labels: Asda has Conservation Grade, Tesco Nature's Choice, Waitrose Traditional English. Sainsbury's plans to launch a range "very soon". At Marks & Spencer all pork, including what goes into made-up dishes, is of this high-welfare standard, but not its bacon or sausages, except for those labelled "free range", which are proving popular.

Stuffed fillet of pork (serves 4)	
350g pork fillet or escalope	
100g white breadcrumbs	
juice/grated rind of 1 lemon	
1 tsp each of dried thyme and marjoram	
1 tbsp chopped fresh parsley	
50g melted butter	
8 stoned prunes	
100g bacon	
small glass white wine	

If using fillet, slit lengthways and flatten. Mix crumbs, lemon, herbs, butter. Spread down middle of fillet or over half escalopes. Tuck prunes in stuffing; use thread or toothpicks to secure meat around it. Lay on a buttered roasting tin, cover with bacon, then with greaseproof paper. Pour two tablespoons of wine into tin. Bake at 160C for 40 minutes (remove paper and baste after 30 minutes). Allow to stand for five minutes before carving thinly. Deglaze tin with remaining wine for gravy.

How to survive the 40 days

If giving up alcohol is your sacrifice for Lent, here are some alternative cheering cocktails

If you wash down your pancakes next Tuesday with a final glass of chablis and vow to give up alcohol for the next 40 days and nights, the chances are that sooner or later you will hit the social drinker's equivalent of "the wall", that point of fatigue through which, like marathon runners, you either charge triumphant or throw in the towel.

The problem usually comes a week or so into Lent on a Saturday night out with friends, when the smug sense of inner cleansing gives way to utter boredom as you face your third mineral water.

The good news is that just as leading chefs such as Anton Mosimann have come to the rescue of defeated dieters by showing that healthy food can still look tempting and taste delicious, bartenders, recognising a trend towards lighter drinking, are shaking up some delicious non-alcoholic cocktails designed to pep up flagging taste buds.

Dorchester hotel, Giuliano Morandini, the bar manager, was delighted to reveal some of his favourite recipes. He and his team whip up all kinds of non-alcoholic concoctions, using fresh fruits in various consistencies. "Some are shaken, some blended, and we might add yoghurt or cream. If people want a particular flavour we are happy to mix something special," he says.

"Mineral water or straight fruit juice can be very boring, but these drinks look pretty and taste exciting."

Part of the attraction of such drinks is undoubtedly the fact that, like real cocktails, they have names which make them instantly sound more fun. Take, for example, Mr Morandini's Pink Lion: one 170ml bottle of ginger beer, a good dash of strawberry syrup (*sirop de fraise*), and the juice of one lime, mixed with ice in a tall glass and decorated with a strawberry and a sprig of mint.

Another favourite is the deliciously simple Mango Crush, made in a double Martini glass from the juice of half a mango and two limes mixed with crushed ice and decorated with a slice of mango and an edible flower.



Join the shakers: bar manager Giuliano Morandini mixing a "virgin" cocktail at the Dorchester

For those who prefer something beefier there is the Tropical: three-quarters of a highball glass of fresh milk (use low fat if you like), topped up with a dash each of green mint syrup and a French almond-flavoured syrup called *sirop d'Orgeat*, decorated with a cherry soaked in mint syrup, and topped with a sprig of fresh mint.

Mr Morandini says there is a trend at the moment towards "virgin" cocktails, such as the colada — the classic pineapple and coconut cream with crushed ice, but no rum — or the frozen daiquiri, particularly when made with strawberry and fresh lime, which produces a really sharp, refreshing drink.

Mr Morandini thinks the number one alcohol-free cocktail is still the Virgin Mary: spicy tomato juice with no vodka. The Dorchester version is so entertaining you would scarcely notice the absence of alcohol anyway, with its celery salt, pepper, tabasco and Worcestershire sauce, lime juice and (the big secret) tarragon and thyme mustard.

"Some people put in horserad-

ish, but I think that makes the drink too pale," Mr Morandini says dismissively.

In the cocktail bar at Stringfellows nightclub the staff have also noticed that "virgin" cocktails are a hit among non-drinkers, and they agree that the name is all important — people like to be heard ordering a Virgin Mary, rather than a tomato juice with Worcestershire sauce.

At the Ritz, which is ever mindful of what's in a name, the staff will rustle up a refreshing little something called a Red Sombbrero: one part each of fresh orange juice, lime cordial, strawberry syrup and grenadine, blended with ice and poured into a long tulip glass, decorated with a strawberry and the piece de resistance, a white edible flower.

Cool Passion is a mix of one part each of fresh lemon juice, mango juice, passion fruit juice and strawberry syrup, shaken with half an egg white and ice, poured into a 10oz glass and topped up with lemonade. The tempting creation

is complemented with a garnish of one slice of orange and two leaves of fresh mint.

Another variation at the Ritz is Summer Dream, in which passion fruit juice is shaken in equal parts with fresh peach juice, lemon juice, peppermint syrup (*sirop de menthe*), a sweet cordial called Gomme, half an egg white and ice. This is topped with soda water and then served in a Paris goblet with one slice of lemon, a slice of lime, and a cherry.

Even in that bar of all bars, the world famous Harry's Bar in Venice, where the Martinis are legendary and the Bellini (rosy peach puree and Prosecco wine) was born, concessions are being made to the drinker who refrains from alcohol.

Conjure up a dream of balmy Venetian nights with the bar's Ski Wasser: one part fresh lemon juice and two parts fresh strawberry juice and a teaspoon of sugar, mixed with ice and topped up with soda water. Sip slowly... and you'll cruise through Lent.

SHEILA KEATING

Flip a pancake for Fat Tuesday

When we were children, my mother would make pancakes for tea on Shrove Tuesday, which my brother and I would sprinkle with lemon juice and sugar, roll up and eat as fast as she could make them.

As I got older, tastes became more sophisticated. As a student at Freiburg university in the spring term, I learnt how to make the most economical use of the expensive, fat white stalks of asparagus. Wrapped first in a slice of ham, then in a pancake, blanched with a cheese sauce and baked under the grill, this was eaten right through the Spargelzeit.

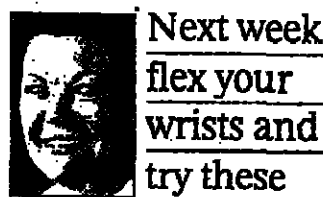
These are forbidden treats for my friend Sandra and others like her who suffer from coeliac disease and must avoid wheat-based products. Among my pancake recipes today I have included some that they can enjoy, made with rice flour and other gluten-free flours, which include cornflour (made from maize) and potato flour.

Buckwheat flour, available in wholefood shops (and in French supermarkets as *blé de sarrazin* or *Saracen wheat*), is milled from a crop that grows readily in exposed conditions. In Britain, buckwheat is generally made from wheat flour and galettes from buckwheat flour. Crêpes are often, but not exclusively, served with sweet fillings, and galettes with savoury fillings — ham, cheese, sausage, vegetables (such as artichoke hearts, asparagus, spinach, mushrooms, onions) and shellfish.

Savoury pancakes are extremely good with smoked fish, salmon, trout, or poached and drained smoked haddock. The classic combination is, of course, buckwheat blini and caviar. Smoked cod's roe is also worth trying.

All these accompaniments are excellent with potato pancakes, which can be made with potato flour, or by grating and soaking peeled potatoes in water until all the starch has leached out. The starch is then mixed with eggs and, for texture, some of the grated potato if you like.

Mixing pancake batter is relatively easy. Achieving a smooth, non-stick pancake first time is usually plan for the first two at least to go into the waste bin. It's not a question of having the pan as hot as possible; the pan must be at the right heat. Too hot and the batter will set before it has had time to spread. Not hot enough and it will probably stick or be



Next week flex your wrists and try these pancakes says Frances Bissell, The Times cook

heavy in texture. I find a well-seasoned, cast-iron crêpe pan, which I bought in France many years ago, is the best implement for the job, but it does require a strong wrist. Ideally, it should be used only for crêpes and never washed, but lightly oiled before putting away.

Fat Tuesday is all about using up rich, luxurious ingredients before Lent. Bring out the eggs, cream and butter and start flexing your wrists.

Heat the pan, and rub all over with kitchen paper dipped in grape-seed or other neutral oil. Stir the batter and pour on just enough to coat the pan all over. When the surface is dry, turn with a spatula (or a flick of the wrist) and cook the other side. Flip on to a warm plate, spoon on the chosen filling, fold and serve. Grease the pan between each galette.

Another way of serving these is in the style of the old-fashioned quire of pancakes; thin pancakes sandwiched with filling, piled one on top of the other, and then cut into wedges like a cake. Sandwich with layers of different smoked fish pâtés or pastes for an excellent brunch, lunch or supper dish.

Potato pancakes
(makes 18-20 small ones)
2oz/60g potato flour
2oz/60g plain flour
pinch of salt
1 free-range egg
1/2pt/280ml water or milk
3oz/85g grated potato (optional)

Sift the flours and salt together, add the egg, lightly beaten, and gradually beat in the liquid until smooth. Stir in the potato, if using it. Have the griddle or pan hot and greased, and spoon on the batter, a tablespoon at a time. The pan may be large enough to cook three or four at a time. When the surface is set, turn and cook the other side. Grease the pan between each cooking. These small pancakes are very good spread with a cream, made by folding grated horseradish into whipped cream or *fromage blanc*, and topped with a piece of smoked trout.

Pikelets, crumpets and blini are all made from a thick batter, often raised with yeast, and poured into rings and placed on the hot greased griddle or in small blini pans, instead of letting the batter spread over the frying pan. To make a very passable version of blini, use half buckwheat flour in the following recipe, add a little more liquid, and make slightly thinner pancakes.

Crumpets
(serves 4)
1 tsp dried yeast
1/2pt/280ml water
pinch of salt
10oz/280g plain flour
pinch of sugar

Sprinkle the yeast on 1/2pt/280ml warm water and add the sugar. When the yeast is bubbling, stir in the flour and salt and mix until you have a smooth, soft dough or firm batter. Cover with a damp cloth and leave to rise in a warm draught-free place for an hour or so. Warm the rest of the water and stir it into the mixture until you have a looser batter. Cover and let it prove for ten to 15 minutes more. Have the griddle hot and greased, with the crumpet rings in place. Pour in the batter to half fill the rings. Cook until holes appear on the top, the surface is dry and the underside nicely browned. Remove and keep them warm in a cloth-lined basket until you have



cooked the rest of the crumpets. These are best served hot and freshly made, although they can be frozen the next day.

Scotch pancakes, or griddle cakes, can also be the basis of a version of blini. Using baking powder instead of yeast they are much quicker to prepare. Again, replace some of the plain flour with buckwheat flour, and leave out the sugar.

Scotch pancakes
(makes about 18)
1/2pt/280g plain flour
1tbsp baking powder
pinch of salt
8oz/280ml milk
1 free-range egg
2tbsp melted butter
2tbsp caster sugar

Spoon the mixture on to the surface, a tablespoon or a soup-spoon at a time, cooking three to four pancakes at once. When the underside is smoothly brown, and the top surface dry and bubbled, turn and cook on the other side.

Finally, a milk-free gluten-free pancake that will take the traditional Shrove Tuesday treatment but can also be turned into a glorious dinner finale, the inspiration for which comes from various sources, including the tropical pina colada and the classic crêpes. I also add rum to the batter to lighten it and use coconut milk for the liquid.

The flour is a mixture of potato flour and rice flour, both of them very fine and highly absorbent. Letting the mixture stand for a while seems to produce a less raggy pancake. You can buy coconut milk in tins from oriental food shops and larger branches of some of the supermarket chains. Do not shake the tin. Open it carefully, and scoop off the thick

"cream", which will have separated from the thinner liquid or milk. Use the cream as a pancake filling and the milk in the batter.

Rice and coconut pancakes
(makes 6)
2oz/60g potato flour
2oz/60g rice flour
8fl oz/230ml coconut milk
1 free-range egg or 2 free-range egg whites
2tbsp rum
up to 8 fl oz/230ml water

Beat all the ingredients together except the water. When the batter is smooth, add half the water and then as much more as you need to obtain the consistency of single cream. Allow to stand for 15-20 minutes while you heat the pan, or griddle, which should be greased between each pancake. Stir the batter again before using and pour a thin layer into the pan. Cook in the usual way. Serve folded with lemon juice and sugar to turn into the following:

Coconut cream and pineapple crêpes
(serves 6)
1 small fresh sweet pineapple
6oz/170g thick coconut cream
icing sugar
6 crêpes

Peel and chop the pineapple, squeezing and reserving the juice from the end pieces and keeping one slice of pineapple for garnish. Mix the pineapple and coconut cream, adding a little icing sugar if necessary. Brush the crêpes all over with pineapple juice. Divide the filling among them, roll up and place in a buttered oven-proof dish. Brush over with any remaining pineapple juice. Cut the pineapple slice into wedges and arrange over the crêpes. Dust with icing sugar and cook in the top of a hot oven for 10-15 minutes, finishing off under the grill if necessary to lightly caramelize the top. The crêpes can also be stacked as described in the first recipe. Next week: A taste of Southeast Asia

Wines with a heart of oak

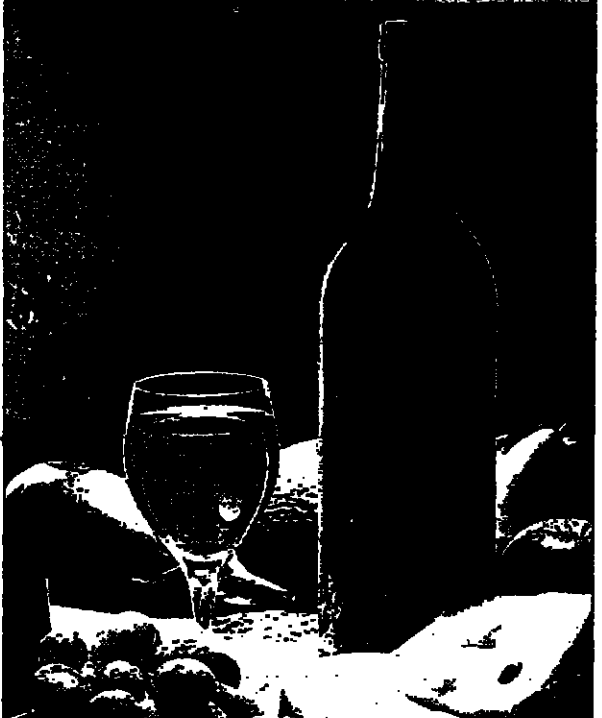
Jane MacQuitty discovers the class in Spain's underrated tempranillo grape, which goes into most riojas

Having just tasted more than 100 different tempranillo and tempranillo-based red Spanish wines, I know this is a great grape variety. It may lack the classic blackcurrant and cigar-box quality of Bordeaux's austere cabernet sauvignons and the seductive, plummy fruit of Burgundy's pinot noirs, but a top-notch Spanish tempranillo is, none the less, one of the world's finest wine grapes.

Tempranillo's big problem is that, much like the zinfandel of California, it is seldom treated like a great grape. It seldom fulfils its true potential because only rarely do Spanish wine makers give it the opportunity to do so. The purest tempranillos of Spain smack a little of the qualities of first-class burgundy and bordeaux. "If it smells like mature burgundy but tastes like mature claret" is still the quickest "insider" method of correctly identifying rioja at blind tastings. And although northern Spain's Rioja region is only planted with 40 per cent of this variety, the best riojas contain at least 50 per cent tempranillo.

When young, top tempranillos have an impressive, deep purple colour; an appealing but not especially assertive plum, sometimes black cherry scent and taste; and a powerful, almost inky complexity. Together these qualities denote class. Older tempranillos take on a gamey, truffle-like characteristic, and those from Rioja sometimes have chocolate or Bovi-like overtones. Tobacco and sandalwood scents are also common in tempranillo-based, aged riojas.

This is rather more to do with their lengthy stint in oak barrels — and almost as long in the bottle — than with the grape's character. Spanish specialists also pick out the scent of strawberries and the taste of prunes in



Good mixer: top riojas contain 50 per cent tempranillo

deemed worthy to be sold as classified wine, the rest is distilled. The health of these vineyards, many of which suffer from bad husbandry and being planted with low quality varieties, is also apparent from their extraordinarily low yields: 20 hectolitres is the Spanish average, which is about one-third of French yields, one-sixth of German.

Some of the bigger producers claim that quantity and quality would be much improved if closely spaced vines were planted, as in Australia and California.

If progress has been slow in the vineyards, improvements in the cellar have been faster. Two-thirds of Spanish wine is still made in more than 1,000 co-operatives, which are beginning to realise the importance of stainless steel, cool, controlled fermentations; new, clean, oak barrels; and early bottling.

True, all the old habits of fermenting wines (stalls and all) for weeks in big, open stone troughs and maturing them in large clay *tinajas*, or clay pots, in the blistering Spanish heat continue. But they appear to be on the decline.

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BEST BUYS

- 1988 Piquera Oddbins £9.49; Laymont & Shaw, The Old Chapel, Millpool, Truro, Cornwall, £10.21; John Armit, 190 Kensington Park Road, W11, £11.5 a case. This great tempranillo effortlessly demonstrates the grape's class. An intense combination of cedar, black cherry, cinnamon and sandalwood. The 1989 is nowhere near as good.
- 1981 La Rioja Alta 904 Gran Reserva L & S £12.37. Not everyone's glass of wine and definitely ready for drinking now. But this gamy, red, rich, gamey, tobacco-scented rioja shows that a predominantly tempranillo-based wine can grow old gracefully.
- 1988 Cosme Palacio Waitrose £4.35, Oddbins £4.49. At the other end of the rioja scale and again better than the 1989 vintage, this soft, ripe, chocolatey rioja is great value for money.
- 1988 Ochoa Tempranillo, Navarra Wizard Wine £5.79. Navarra makes increasingly impressive wines. This plummy wine is a dash over-oaked, but reveals Navarra's pedigree.
- 1987 Ylera Cosceta L & S £6.40, Thrasher £6.95. An unusual tempranillo style that I liked. It has curious apple, rhubarb and eucalyptus-like flavours. Intriguing.

Farewell, wicked mistress of the electric blanket

Bad news, I am moving out. Not immediately, but certainly by this time next year I shall be living elsewhere — assuming I can find a sufficiently inventive estate agency which can come up with the accommodation that I am looking for. My requirements are quite strict.

I have in mind something basic, but certainly with character. I am not too worried about spaciousness: just enough room to stretch out will do nicely. But heating is going to be very important, and so is waterproofing. I am not too worried about how much land it has, for I have sufficient of that already. I also ought to mention that it has to be on wheels, and preferably made of wood.

The move arises because I can no longer pretend I am an adequate shepherd. If I conduct my lambing from beneath the comfort of a multi-tog duvet, the wicked mistress of the electric blanket too

FARMER'S DIARY: PAUL HEINEY

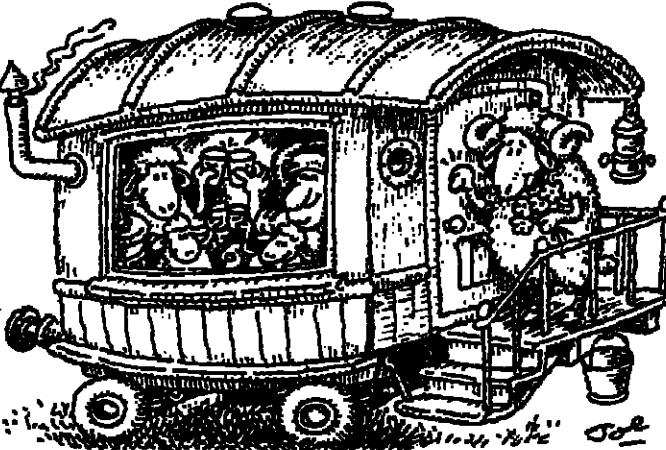
easily seduces me away from the essential marriage between a shepherd and his flock at lambing time. So next year I am going to do my duty properly, and as it does not seem reasonable to have the sheep move into the house, I am going to live with them.



of warming themselves: sickly lambs were thought to thrive on a quick sip of whisky administered by the shepherd swilling it first round his own mouth and then spitting it into the lamb's. Several doses per night probably did little for the poor creature but no doubt kept the shepherd cheerful at what can be a depressing time.

Shepherds always used to live with their flocks at lambing time, and many still camp out in caravans. But I have it in mind to find myself a traditional shepherd's hut of the kind that moves from field to field, and in which the flockmaster spent long months of the year. They were cosy little vans: a cross between a railway wagon and a ship's cabin, with a cheery little billy-stove round which to warm sickly lambs. Shepherds, I read, had other ways

For lambing is depressing. It is one of the crescendos of the farming year, played out against a background of newborn bleats and milky, mothering ewes. But only in retrospect do I find joy at lambing time. As I look at our pen of healthy, bouncing lambs fighting their early battles at the trough when I see the energy with which those stubby little tails shake when they have successfully



latched on to mother's teat, when I walk around in the evening and the round-bellied little creatures are asleep while the ewes keep watch, I find it easy to forget the anguish that has got us this far. But I never do forget. It is not

possible to be unmoved by the sight of a ewe trying with all her might to lick life into her stillborn lamb. It is a pitiful business to have to drag dead lambs from the wombs of otherwise healthy ewes. But the worst thing of all is the

suspicion that you, as shepherd, may in any way be responsible for the lamb losing its life.

So far I have been dutiful and made visits to the pens last thing at night, once in the early hours and again at breakfast, but some nights ago, after a hard week, I took time off, had a few drinks and slept long and hard. It was too long. By the time I was at the lambing pen, a couple of hours later than usual, there were four dead lambs: two sets of twins.

They were sealed in the sac in which they were born and had they been able to take those first vital gasps of air they might have lived. But I was not there to help them: not around to stick a quick finger in their mouths, feel the lambs' first sucking reflex as it tried to squeeze milk from the finger. I was not there to oversee those first brave stumbling steps as the bleary lamb makes its way to the teat. I have now watched

calves, lambs and piglets make those faltering steps and it is the bravest little journey in the world.

But all I had were four corpses and a couple of bewildered mothers, confused by their loyalties which seemed divided between their dead lambs and the anticipation of food. Within the hour, healthy twins were born, then triplets, and the heart rose again, until a late-night check revealed one of the twins had died, and then the nagging thoughts began.

Next year it will be different. If I can find a shepherd's hut I shall move in with them. I know it is not smart these days for farmers to confess any affection for their flock, and hard-headed commercial farmers will already have written lambing losses into the balance sheet, but I am fond of the old ewes. And for the few short weeks of the year when they need me, I must be there. Full time.

Good (stately) housekeeping

As the dust covers come off again, Victoria McKee meets the National Trust's cleaning lady

Helen Lloyd is the housekeeper of our heritage. At 37 she is responsible for the upkeep of 190 properties and their priceless collections of art, books, ceramics, furniture and textiles. Only the second National Trust Housekeeper to be appointed since the title was created in 1977, she is in charge of a team of cleaners who move into the Trust's properties in winter to make them ready for the busy summer season.

Good housekeeping, National Trust style — as preached by Miss Lloyd at her annual winter course for up to 100 staff — means to clean as infrequently as necessary, as thoroughly and gently as possible and in a carefully controlled and coordinated fashion. There are no arbitrary flicks of a feather duster, no routine weekly polishes.

Ceramics are dusted once a year and washed every five years, metalwork thoroughly cleaned once a year, furniture every two to three years — a *laissez faire* policy Miss Lloyd would advise most householders to follow.

All the Trust's houses in East Anglia and Northern Ireland come under Miss Lloyd's personal jurisdiction, while the others are divided among her eight regional housekeepers — only one of them (Andrew Bush of the southern region) male.

National Trust housekeepers are largely drawn from conservators, who can either go on to become respected specialists in an individual field or be concerned with long-term preservation of the whole. Miss Lloyd explains.

Accustomed to jokes about her profession, Miss Lloyd is not remotely like Mrs Danvers in *Rebecca*. She is a soft-spoken woman, whose enthusiasm for the conservation of old buildings and their contents rubs off as gently yet surely on those around her as the grime comes off 200-year-

old china under their coaxing ministrations with cotton wool on cocktail sticks.

Miss Lloyd has been with the Trust for ten years. For her dust, light, heat and humidity are the enemies — but so, too, are the visitors for whose benefit she labours, and who wreak the most destruction. "Dust brought in by visitors is absolutely detrimental to paintings, textiles and bronzes," she says.

At historic Wimpole Hall, last owned by Rudyard Kipling's daughter Elsie Bannister, and considered by the Trust to be "the greatest country house in Cambridge-shire", Miss Lloyd and her team of administrators — a curator (responsible for the fabric of the building) and "conservator cleaners" — demonstrate their skills.

As the house prepares to open to the public on March 28 after its winter hibernation, they are eager to show why five to six-month winter closures are necessary to maintain properties in peak condition.

During the closure each marble fireplace, with its ornate metalwork and grate, can take up to a week to clean and blacklead properly. The more than 100 pairs of curtains will be either taken down or vacuumed (through gauze) and "rested" over the backs of chairs. Every antique rug will be rolled and wrapped, each piece of furniture shrouded in colour-coded cotton covers. All the ornaments will be encased in acid-free tissue paper, each coved and corniced corner carefully cleaned, and every one of literally thousands of books taken down from the library shelves, dusted with a shaving brush and inspected, and treated for pests.

The ultra-violet filters on the windows must be regularly monitored for breakdown, the temperature and humidity monitored with whirling hygrometers or electronic



Polished art: one of Helen Lloyd's army of specialist workers cleans a silver bowl — but not the Mrs Beeton way

thermohygrometers and controlled, if necessary, with humidifiers or de-humidifiers.

If repairs need to be done — as they did this winter at Wimpole following a fire in a chimney flue — special dust-proof tunnels must be constructed to channel debris out of the door.

"A lot of what we do is really quite labour-saving," Miss Lloyd says. "We employ traditional methods when we feel they are the best, but combine them with modern, scientific techniques."

In many ways Mrs Beeton's ideas about housekeeping were much more radical than ours, and some of the old patent recipes — such as one with caustic soda for cleaning silver — created a chemical reaction which is harmful and should be avoided.

Each house presents particular challenges. Take, for example, the animal skins at The Argory in Northern Ireland. The skins must be carefully examined and treated for pests, and indeed an entire chapter of the National Trust Housekeeper's bible, *The National Trust Manual of Housekeeping* (Viking, £17.99), written by the Trust's

first Housekeeper, Sheila Stainton, is about how to deal with "natural history collections", including mounted mammals, birds, reptiles and fish. "Cleaning," it says, "should be carried out only if the specimen is robust..."

"When cleaning, isolate the specimen from the rest of the collection so that if insects are discovered they will not be brushed off near other specimens and so contaminate them."

The manual advises on everything from how to clean a set of boxing gloves to an elaborate crystal chandelier. "It's often the things that sound the most mundane which are the most difficult to learn," Miss Lloyd has discovered. "It's not so much about how to clean the nose of a stuffed bear (dust it with a soft brush), it's more about how to vacuum a carpet (across the grain, against the grain, and then again to lay the pile flat) or deal with an incense burner."

The manual lists recommended housekeeping aids, from acid-free blotting paper to Zebrite, and suppliers, including National Trust Enterprises, which sells the full range of cleaning brushes,

furniture polish, the housekeeping manual and a training video.

Does Miss Lloyd follow her National Trust housekeeping policies in her own home? "I employ someone else to clean my home," she says with just a hint of embarrassment, "and although she is fond of

using National Trust furniture polish I fear she probably puts it on every week. Fortunately, with my furniture that doesn't really matter."

For further information contact National Trust (Enterprises) Ltd, Western Way, Melksham, Wiltshire SN12 8DZ (0225 704545).

Events

- Bolton harkers: More than 200 entries compete in 25 classes at the Northern Great Dane Dog Show, winners going on to Crufts. Bolton Sports and Exhibition Centre, Silwood Street, Lancs (0204 53122). Tomorrow, 11am-5pm, £1.
- Brandon mush: Eighty teams and more than 200 huskies compete in the Siberian Husky Club rally for the fastest aggregate time over four dirt tracks ranging from three to eight miles. Brandon Mush, Suffolk, signed off A1065 (0842 810752). Mr Palmer 1-day, 9.30am, tomorrow, 9am. Spectators free.
- Caernarfon eagle: Talk and video on new fly-fishing technology with the Snowdonia branch of the Fly Dressers' Guild. Library, Pavilion Road, Caernarfon, Gwynedd (0286 5944). Tues, 7.30pm, £1.
- Chichester birdwatch: RSPB boat tour of the harbour with a chance to spot 40 varieties of waders and wildfowl. Chichester (01243 799015). Wittering Road, West Sussex (0243 7801-1). Tomorrow, 2.30pm, £3, child £1.50.
- Cottenham races: Cambridge University Dragbushes Point-to-Point. Six races. Men's Open Race at 1.30pm. Cottenham Racecourse, near Cambridge (0359 40113). Today, 12.30pm, £5-15.
- Durham lambing Sunday: See new lambs and calves and how they are cared for, plus sheep shearing and pony rides. Durham College of Agriculture (091-386 1351). Tomorrow, 1.4pm (no dogs) £1.50 per family.
- Scarborough shipping festival: Two-hundred-year-old custom in which the ringing of the Pancake Bell heralds the start of mass public shipping along the beach. South Foreland, Scarborough, N. Yorks (0723 373333). Tues, noon. Free.

Gardens to visit

- Wiltshire: Lacock Abbey gardens has nine acres of parkland with a lake, fine trees and early spring flowers, including winter aconites, snowdrops and crocuses. Chippingham. Follow National Trust signs on A350 midway between Melksham and Chippenham. £1, child free. Tomorrow and March 2 for NGS. Open 2-5pm.
- East Lothian: The Old House "Plants from the Past" display in a garden designed and planted to early 18th-century design. Parterre, gravel walk, summer house and kitchen garden. 1 North Street, Belhaven. 1m W of Dunbar. From A1 lake A11087 via West Burn towards Dunbar. Entry by collecting box. Daily from tomorrow, 1-5pm, except Tuesdays.
- Gloucestershire: The Old Manor, Twynning. Two-acre garden with trees, shrubs, alpine, pools, rock beds and troughs. Twynning, 3m north of Tewkesbury via A58; follow sign to Twynning; garden at T-junction at top end of village. £1.20, child 50p. Open every Monday 2-6pm.

Come into Woolworths and you'll see lots of strange behaviour.

Gossipy tracks and signs

Feather report

I confess I have a soft spot for gossip. Who is doing what to whom, and why and where and how many times? So-and-so has a new job, a new partner, a new babe: gossip is the stuff of life, because life is its subject.

Gossip gets a traditionally bad press: well, malicious gossip, vicious speculation and out-and-out lies are hardly life-affirming. But most gossip is no more, or no less, than interest in people other than one's self. It seems to me that people who lack such curiosity are in deep trouble.

Perhaps a passion for wild-life is a different manifestation of the life-affirming passion for gossip. Life outside oneself is the central concern of biographers and historians, and for ethologists, those who study the behaviour of wild animals.

Gossip can lead to profound and important matters: or it can exist for its own sake. Gossip may throw new light on the work of James Joyce, or the Thatcher years, or bitter courtship or the matriarchal structure of elephant society: or it may simply inform us that Liz next door is pregnant again and the chiffchaff has returned to the wood out at the back. But it is all to do with life.

One of the special delights of the local gossip column, by



which I mean Sign: footprints, droppings, bits of carcass, broken vegetation, holes in the ground. An expert can read the bush as if it were today's newspaper.

In the bush it is a natural thing to do, because everything is on your side. In the dry season, the trails are paved with fine dust, and footprints stick: there will be nothing to wash them away for half a year. Droppings are preserved, almost mummified in the dry heat. All around is Sign: some of it months old, some of it hot off the presses.

An expert will tell you that a single male lion passed here two days ago, and early this morning an old elephant bull and two younger ones went by. They have been eating sausage-tree fruit.

In Britain, Sign is much harder, and less obvious. However, there is a book to help you: *Tracks and Signs*, first published five years ago and now in paperback.

Say you find a broken egg. Why is it broken? Has it

hatched naturally? Did a weasel get it? Or a magpie? Don't bother to see if the egg has fallen from a nest above you: most birds can't break open their own eggs. Mammals may leave teeth marks, and they will clean out the shell completely. A bird will attack the middle of the egg, and will probably leave small traces of membrane. If the membrane is more or less intact, the shell was probably broken open by the former occupant.

Or, say you find an opened nut. Who opened it? If it has been jammed into a crack in the bark, go for nuthatch. A neat hole punched in an acorn? Great tit. Woodpeckers will punch open hazelnuts still on the branch. But if the nuts have been split in two and the shells scattered about at the bottom, go for squirrel.

The book covers all kinds of Sign. Footprints: a cormorant has all four toes linked by web, a swan three. It also looks at nests, roosting sites, the signs of feeding and other behaviour, the pellets of indi-

gestible stuff that many birds heave up, droppings ("a number of basic types of dropping, taking account of contents, consistency and form, can be recognised. The droppings may be completely liquid, semi-liquid or solid"), fallen feathers and abandoned skulls.

This is an area of birding skill about which few of us have even a clue. Recognition by sight so completely dominates birdcraft that other skills are often ignored. Many birders have a deaf spot for call, but practically everyone has a blind spot for Sign.

For some people, knowledge of Sign is an important aid in scientific and conservation work. For others, I suspect, a little knowledge of Sign will be no more than grist to the gossip mill: a weasel had this egg, a nuthatch this nut. Does it matter who ate the nut, or the egg? Well, only if life matters.

SIMON BARNES

■ *Tracks and Signs of the Birds of Britain and Europe: An Identification Guide*, by Roy Brown, John Ferguson, Michael Lawrence, David Lee (Christopher Helm & Co. Black, £14.99).

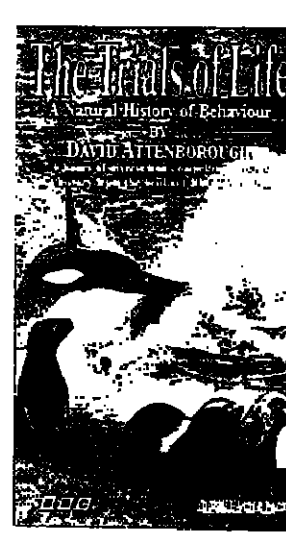
■ *What's about Birds?* — watch out for great crested grebe starting courtship displays on inland waters. Twitchee — gr. falcon on Akeragh Lough, Co. Kerry; Hume's yellow-browed warbler at Plymouth, Devon; two more little buntings in Cornwall. Details from Birdline, 0891 700222.



Double Pack £14.99



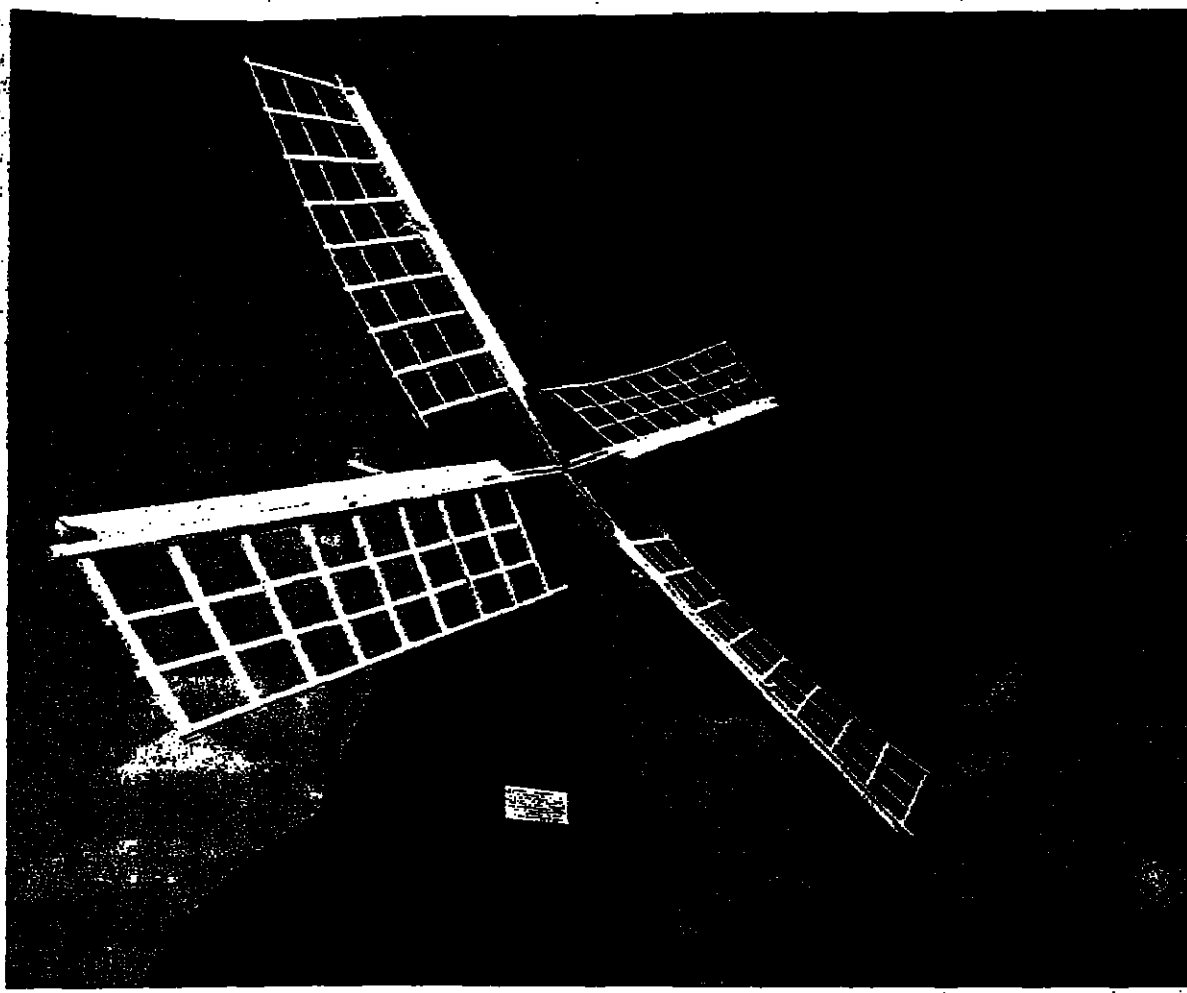
£14.99



Double Pack £19.99

WOOLWORTHS

WHERE TO WALK



Mellow marsh: Wicken Fen's windpump was re-erected in 1956 to lift water back and keep the marsh wet

Wicken Fen, a fragment of the primeval marshes which has survived the transformation of the vast East Anglian ooze into arable farmland, is one of the oldest nature reserves in Britain. Its car-park, in Lode Lane, Wicken, is also a convenient meeting place for a series of interlinked walks collectively known as the Wicken Walks.

At the urging of Victorian entomologists anxious to protect the fen's damselfly, dragon and butterflies, the National Trust acquired its first tract of land in Wicken in 1899, and now owns 605 acres. Two routes are signposted through Wicken Sedge Fen, the most important part of the reserve and the only remaining undrained fenland readily accessible to the public.

The "islands" of higher ground were once a refuge from the swamps and phantoms of the marshes. Now the raised sanctuaries are the few scraps of fen which remain, and Wicken Fen is up to 10ft higher than the surrounding farmland where the peat has shrunk. It has taken £18,000 of polythene sheeting to seal the banks and reduce seepage, and the windpump that took water out of cultivated land nearby was re-erected beside the reserve's Boardwalk Trail in 1956 to lift water into Wicken Fen and help keep it wet.

The Boardwalk Trail, suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs, is about three-quarters of a mile long and takes half an hour to cover. The Nature Trail is two miles long and takes at least an hour, with water-proof footwear recommended.

For a longer walk, signposted by the county council through a complete cross-section of Fenland landscape, go from the car-park towards the nature reserve, but then continue on the track to the left of Monks Lode, the water channel which may orig-



inally, like others in the area, have been built by the Romans. The name comes from its later use by the monks of Spinnery Abbey for fishing and transport.

Commoners' rights to collect sedge and peat on Wicken Poor's Fen, over the lode, are still administered by the parish council. Cross the lode by footbridge at the windpump to skirt the mature carr and woodland of St Edmund's Fen on the northern bank of the Running Water (also known as New River).

St Edmund's, like Wicken, belongs to the National Trust, and the alder buckthorn scrub is being kept in check with periodic mowing and cutting to promote the growth of dampland herbs such as ragwort, purple and yellow loosestrife, meadowsweet, comfrey and marsh orchid.

Turn left to walk with the pylons northward to No-Ditch-Field, crossing the A1123. On No-Ditch-Field medieval strip farming is still maintained. Tenants are allowed to have

more than one strip, but to maintain the field pattern cannot have any two together.

At the signpost, turn right under the pylon line toward Soham and follow the bridleway past Soham House Fen along Horseshoe Drove, bordered by mature hedges of alder, hawthorn, blackthorn and ash sheltering bluebells and wood anemones. Just south of Soham turn left along Bracks Drove, with a hedge along the southeast side protecting flowering plants and teasels which attract finches and butterflies. Bear left under the pylons again toward Wicken.

The footpath passes the end of Drove Lane and crosses the main road to use Back Lane, past the recently renovated windmill, as a quieter route back to Lode Lane and the car-park.

• The complete circular route is seven miles. The Ordnance Survey reference for the starting point in the NT car-park, on Landranger Sheet 154 (Cambridge, Newmarket & surrounding area), is 565705.



BEST OF BRITAIN

ELY

The monotonous Fens, shrouded in legend, are host to a Norman masterpiece. Robin Young reports

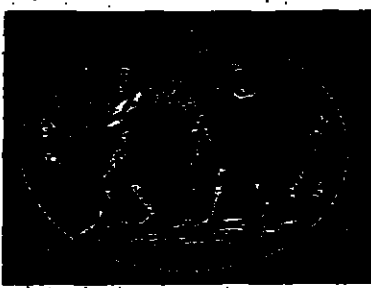
The best agricultural land in Britain was sucked by Dutch know-how from agile and mist-ridden bogs that were once the last redoubt of Englishness. Now the hard-won acres are a wasting asset. Flat and featureless, they are blowing away at the rate of an inch a year, picked up by winds which scour the wide open Fenland spaces and sweep the fine silt in dark curtains of dust out to the North Sea.

No landscape in Britain has been so radically altered by man as the Black Fen, centred on the Isle of Ely. In winter mud or summer dust storms, nowhere provides a more eerie environment in which to reflect on the self-defeating nature of our best endeavours.

This is a countryside in which natural order has been stood on its head. Much of the land now lies below sea level. What were river beds are now silt ridges meandering across the countryside. What were the canals and ditches dug to drain the land now stand embanked above it like varicose veins. Windmills, steam and diesel engines had to be progressively enlarged, demolished and replaced as they dredged ever deeper and lifted water higher to keep floods at bay. Where the peat has shrivelled away, front doors that once had thresholds at ground level now hover at the top of staircases as many as ten steps high.

"Undiscovered, unspoiled, unrivalled," boasts the local travel brochure. Try to say that the fens have been raped, pillaged, drained, drilled and regulated, and finally made over to intensive agriculture and the greater glory of sugar beet, potatoes, celery, carrots and onions. Yet none of this is to deny their abiding fascination.

Charles Kingsley, the Victorian novelist, Christian socialist and Regius Professor of History at Cambridge, defined part of the Fenland's enduring appeal: "Overhead the arch of Heaven spread more ample than elsewhere, as over the open sea; and that vastness gave and still gives such cloudlands, such sunrises,



Glass from the cathedral collection

such sunsets as can be seen nowhere else within these isles."

Kingsley was writing in his best-selling history of the local hero, the last, defiant Englishman who gave his name as the book's title, *Hereward the Wake*. When, these skyscrapers were fringed not with crops of vegetables but by the waving heads of reeds and sedges, and when underfoot were "foul and flabby quagmires", half open water, half marsh, and often all shrouded in impenetrable mist, it was here that the English resistance movement staged its last desperate struggle against the Norman conquest.

Late in 1071, at the end of a five-year war in which perhaps 100,000 died, Hereward's guerrilla forces of outlaws and moody dissidents held out for months in the watery fastness of the wild fens, while William the Conqueror's army laboured to build a causeway to penetrate their defences.

What are believed to be the causeway's remains can still be seen, stretching across the now-drained fen near the village of Willingham. It is just a rough, hedged track, barely raised above the surrounding fields, but it rests on the foundations of stone, timber and rubble laid by William's sappers.

William allegedly employed a witch to hurl curses on Hereward's forces. Her pagan imprecations were in the end unnecessary. When Ely, the last bastion of English freedom, finally succumbed, it was the Christian monks, weary of the privations of the siege, who were popularly supposed to have betrayed the defenders.

Hereward made good his escape through the marshes to become the stuff of legends. The few known facts are available in Ely's excellent town museum, in the cathedral buildings along the High Street.

The cathedral dominates not only the small and unassuming town of Ely but the endless, monotonous levels of the fens which stretch as far as the eye can see. Today, as when Thomas Fuller wrote in 1660, "Ely presenteth itself from afar to the eye of the traveller, and on all sides, at great distance, not only maketh a promise, but giveth earnest of the beauty thereof."

The cathedral is one of the most magnificent in Britain. William the Conqueror's appointee as abbot, Simeon, started building the west front only a dozen years after Hereward had finally fled, at the latest by 1083. Building

work went on as steadily as possible in those troublous times for more than a century, until the cathedral was completed in 1189. There have been only five significant alterations to the building since.

The stupendous nave, a complete and perfect specimen of late Norman work 248ft long, with an exceptionally tall triforium accentuating the impression of triumphantly soaring height, is one of the world's greatest architectural thrills.

The builders were fortunate in their choice of stone, from Barnack near Stamford, the hardest limestone quarried in England. Great slabs of it were brought to Ely by water. Its exceptionally durable quality can be seen in the intricate pattern and 12th-century carving of the doorways which once opened on to the cloisters from the south side of the nave.

None of this might have been left to us had not Abbot Hervé le Breton been confirmed as bishop of a new diocese of Ely, carved out of Lincoln in 1109. If Ely had not been an episcopal see at the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539 it would probably have become just one more majestic ruin. As it was, the bishop continued to be titular abbot, and to this day Ely has no bishop's throne.

Early in the 12th century Bishop Eustace, at his own expense, added the great and beautiful early English Galilee Porch to the west frontage; in the 13th century, Bishop Hugh of Northwold extended the cathedral eastwards by building the pure and dignified six-bay presbytery in Barnack stone and Purbeck marble; and in the 14th century work had begun erecting the Lady Chapel, be-

Witnesses ancient and modern: the presbytery and the north transept, when disaster struck. On February 12 1322 the cathedral's central tower collapsed, burying the Norman choir in a pile of rubble. In a "moment of supreme creative vision", Alan of Walsingham, the sacrist in charge of the fabric, saw in the gaping 72ft-wide hole that was left the opportunity for a brilliant new design. In a supreme example of medieval craftsmanship, he erected eight pillars at the void's corners and mounted on them great timber triangles which



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Hereward's heritage: detail from a cathedral painting

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Hotels worth a look

Once every four years women are supposed to take the marital initiative and propose. Today's the day but, since acceptance cannot be guaranteed, it is vital to choose the time and place very carefully.

Country house hotels provide the perfect setting. Here are a few that may match your perfect man to the perfect hotel:

Academic man: Remind him of his student days and take him to Oxford, only this time stay in style in the extensively renovated Old Parsonage, overlooking Keble College. The 30-bedroom hotel has an informal restaurant and residents get a preferential table reservation at Browns across the road. If a proposal at the hotel is accepted today, the owners will offer a free wedding night. From £105 per person for two nights, bed and breakfast (0865 310210).

Athletic man: Chewton Glen Hotel in the New Forest has to be the ultimate in the pampering stakes, particularly with its indoor tennis courts and multi-million pound health club. Treat him to a massage, encour-

If you are going to pop the question

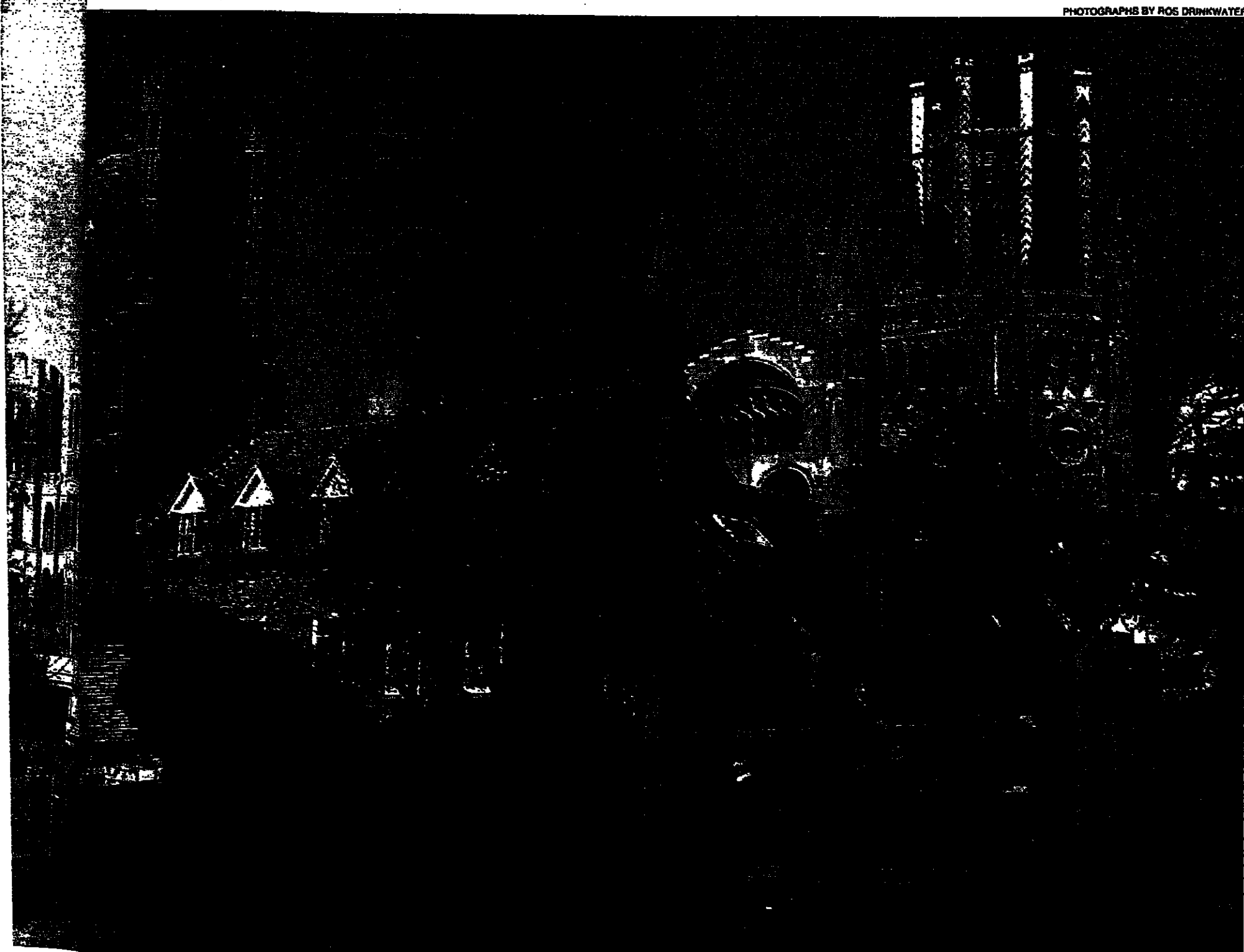
age a dip in the ozone-treated, Grecian-style swimming pool and let him out to play a round of golf. From £243 per person for two nights, dinner, bed and breakfast, and full use of the health club (0425 275341).

Outdoor man: Linthwaite House is an unpretentious Lakeland house built in 1900. Comfortably and charmingly renovated by Mike Bevan, the owner, it has 15 acres and the pretty conservatory overlooks Windermere. The hotel will lend maps, hire out boots and dry wet clothes. Five of the rooms have lake views, three have king-sized beds with canopies. The first ten women who successfully propose at the hotel today and return for their honeymoon or a "romantic break" will be given a free bathrobe. £138 per person for two nights, dinner, bed and breakfast, plus champagne, flowers and heart-shaped chocolates (05394 88600).

High-tech man: If he is impressed by state-of-the-art gadgetry he will like The Falkin,

just off London's Hyde Park Corner. The rooms have synchronised lighting to illuminate your path, touch-activated panels to control electronic equipment, including floor-ceiling pleated curtains, which slide out of a recess. Beds piled high with goose-feather pillows; the baths are big enough for two people. The kitchen is run by a top Michelin chef (try the risotto). Stylish though rather more bizarre like than romantic. Special

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROG DRINKWATER



Witness: schoolchildren swing on a gate near the cathedral, unimpressed by the miracle of medieval art and craft behind them, with its 60ft lantern supported by eight ten-ton oak trees

Port at their apices a 60ft lantern is a single oak tree ten tons high. The soaring, stellar glory of Ely. At some time the northwest tower fell, and the medieval tower topped the west tower. A large octagonal belfry with four supporting turrets, the exterior an attractive, rounded appearance. And that, with the internal embellishment of two fine chapels for bishops Alcock and West, would have been it.

had an excess of religious zeal not dictated that at the time of the Reformation men should feel obliged to deface the beautiful chancel carvings of the Lady Chapel and to knock all its windows out. Recently they have been replaced with near-plain glass discreetly sponsored by modern benefactors. To see stained glass, ancient and modern, at close quarters the visitor should climb to the cathedral's north triforium gallery, as wide as a street, which houses the Stained Glass Museum's well displayed collection.

Though the cathedral cloister buildings disappeared during the Commonwealth, Ely does not really qualify as one of the ruins Cromwell knocked about. This was, after all, his home town. Before he rose to be Lord Protector, the wary puritan was the cathedral's tithe farmer, and collected his neighbours' dues in the oak-panelled room where visitors to his house now watch a heavily accented, and hagiographic, audio-visual presentation of his life.

Cromwell did, as Governor of Ely, write to the Precentor, the Reverend Hitch, demanding that he "forbear altogether the choir service, so undignified and offensive, lest the soldiers should in any tumultuary or disorderly way attempt the reformation of the cathedral church".

When the demand was ignored, Cromwell strode down to the cathedral "with rabble at his heels, and with his hat on", ordered Hitch to "leave off your fooling", and locked the door of the cathedral, pocketing the key. The great building remained closed for 17 years.

Cromwell's intention, though, was to "make the Isle of Ely the strongest place in the world... a place for God to dwell in". When in 1645 the Royalists came as close as nearby Huntingdon, Cromwell, like Hereward before him, offered Ely as a sanctuary for refugees.

Exposed by the drainage effected by Cornelius Vermuden and his successors, and easily accessible by road, rail or river, Ely today is a modest market town dwarfed by its immense cathedral.

In the antique provincial charm of the buildings clustered around the cathedral, and in the views from the riverside and the park, the visitor finds reassurance that this is one English town where God has still not given up his residence.



Corridor of power: Ely's nave, a perfect specimen of late Norman work 248ft long

★ WHERE TO STAY ★

There is no better way to immerse yourself in the monastic and collegiate atmosphere of Ely than to lodge at the Black Hostel, in Firmary Lane beneath the cathedral walls, as visiting Benedictine monks did in the past. Canon and Mrs Green offer one large and comfortable apartment with double or twin beds, bathroom, and a sitting room which incorporates 11th-century Norman arches in its walls (toilet downstairs), and one big double bedroom with bathroom and use of the medieval undercroft for breakfast. Both overlook the garden, have television and tea/coffee-making facilities, and can be converted to accommodate families. £40 double per night including breakfast (0353 662612).

The Lamb Inn (Queens Moat House) dates from the reign of Richard II (1416) and was Ely's principal coaching inn. It has 32 single, twin/double, family and four-poster rooms, each with private bathroom and shower, television and radio, direct dial phones, trouser presses, hair-dryers and tea and coffee-making equipment. Single £55-£60, double/twins £72-£75, family rooms £81-£87.50, four poster £90. Weekend breaks £37.50 per person per night, or £43.50 single (0353 663574).

At Wicken Spinnery Abbey is an 18th-century house on the site an Augustinian Priory founded in about 1220. A subsequent owner was Henry Cromwell, Oliver's fourth son. Here Mrs Fuller offers bed and breakfast on the dairy farm in two double rooms and one twin. There is a separate lounge for guests. £14 per person, £15 in en suite accommodation (0353 720971).



Retreat in complete comfort: inside the Black Hostel

★ WHERE TO EAT ★

- Ely's best restaurant is Old Fire Engine House, 25 St Mary's Street, at the western end of the green in front of the cathedral, opposite Oliver Cromwell's House. Part friendly country house, part art gallery, it serves sound, homey cooking using largely local ingredients at sensible prices, and in generous quantities. Main courses, including good casseroles, £10.80 to £12.10. Dinner about £35 a head. The wine list is unusually interesting, with some exceptionally good value bin ends (0353 662582).
- Dominique's, 8 St Mary's Street, is open 10am-6pm, except Mondays, and serves dinners on Friday and Saturday nights only. Lunch dishes such as coq au vin and skate with capers are competently cooked by the French chef-proprietor, Dominique Bregnon, and keenly priced (£4.95). The wine list, though short, reaches right up to 1982 classed growth claret. Dinner £9.75 for two courses, £12.75 for three. Above average cakes and pastries (0353 665011).
- The Peking Duck, 26 Fore Hill (closed Monday all day and Tuesday lunch), is a popular Chinese restaurant, serving staple items of Chinese cuisine by numbers along with some more original creations in pleasant, comfortable surroundings. Meals about £10 a head (0353 662948/662063).
- The Lamb, which as a coaching inn had the reputation of serving a never-changing menu of "spitchcocked fowls and mutton chops", now serves more varied lunches, £6 to £10.25, and dinners at £13.50 for three courses.
- Light meals are also served in the cathedral Refectory, or in the Almshouse, which can be reached through the cathedral grounds or from the High Street, opposite Market Square. Open daily 10am-5pm, and in the evenings Wed-Sat (0353 663609).
- The coffee room in the timber-framed Tudor Steeple Gate on the High Street serves soup and rolls (£1.65) and a selection of filled rolls, savouries and jacket potatoes (£1.40-£1.90).

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collection (19th and 20th century) is in the Rex Whistler gallery on the first floor. Room 3 overlooks the Black Mountains and has a four-poster bed. From £320 per person for two nights, dinner bed and breakfast (0874 754525).

Antique-loving man: Chilton Park hotel is owned by the Millers (of *Miller's Antiques Price Guide* fame) and is full of antiques and objets d'art. Set in 250 acres, the 17th-century house is near Maidstone, Kent. Each bedroom follows an antique theme, but the hotel is far from "precious". Visitors are encouraged to put their feet up in front of the open fires. Hundreds of candles are lit nightly by staff dressed in Edwardian/Victorian uniform. £175 per person for any two nights, dinner, bed and breakfast, including champagne (0622 859803).

Music-loving man: Huntsham Court makes few concessions to the 20th century: no telephones, television sets, tea-making ma-

chines or locks on bedroom doors. Choose your own music from some 10,000 records or tapes. Bedrooms are named after composers. "Beethoven", for example, has a baby grand piano next to the bed. Dinner, house-party style, is served at a communal refectory table. The hotel is in an isolated spot about half an hour's drive from Taunton, Somerset. From £150 per person for two nights, tea, dinner, bed and breakfast (03986 365).

Potential family man: To convince him that romantic weekends away together won't disappear once you have children, take him to Woolley Grange at Bradford-on-Avon, just outside Bath. The owners have provided a nursery supervised by a resident nanny. Good food and lovely scenery. The most romantic room is West Gable. Any woman who has her proposal accepted will be offered a free weekend. From £139 per person for two nights, dinner, bed and breakfast (0221 64705).

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**Nicole Swengley
on the new
harmony at
Glyndebourne**

The Organ Room at Glyndebourne is one of England's grandest sitting rooms. Used in the past for chamber music, it is now appreciated by opera-goers, particularly latecomers who can watch a performance on close-circuit television until they can enter the auditorium. It is also used by the Christie family, owners of Glyndebourne, for parties and receptions.

Despite the impressive oak panelling, 17th-century paintings and renowned flower arrangements, the room was let down by its shabby sofas until an interior designer, Sasha Waddell, approached Lady Christie with the idea of re-upholstering and recovering the sofas and armchairs in a new fabric which owes its origins to a worsted damask used in grand houses in the 17th century.

Changing the look of a room simply by recovering its furniture is not something one would normally expect to achieve, but it was the choice of material, its colour and the expertise involved in the re-modelling which prompts Lady Christie to say: "Doing this has transformed the room."

"Because the room is used by the public, the fabric had to be very hard-wearing," Ms Waddell says. "But I didn't want anything too opulent or dressy, even though it is a very grand room, so I chose a quieter but durable fabric which Zoffany has just started to make. It is a pure worsted damask which was fashionable for wall-hangings in the late 17th century."

"A silk damask would have looked too rich, especially as the two contrasting weaves, which create a damask pattern, catch the light in two different ways. The effect I wanted to achieve was more muted."

The designs derive from a block-printed wallpaper of the early 19th century, based on a French damask of the late 18th century, found in France by Humphrey Boyle.



Sitting comfortably: Sasha Waddell, left, and Lady Christie try out one of the newly restored sofas in Glyndebourne's Organ Room

Zoffany's design consultant, who says: "What we have done, after reproducing it on wallpaper, is to produce a fabric which must be very like the original source for the design."

The colour of the new covers was important because the Organ Room has no curtains, and little furniture other than a grand piano, the organ, a large table decorated with Chinese vases, and a desk in the bay window.

Ms Waddell says: "I selected three different colours — an inky slate blue which looks wonderful in front of the steeple grey organ pipes and the wood panelling. At the other end of the room there is a book-lined gallery so I chose a tomato red, which also works well with the panelling. The armchair next to the dark blue sofa is green. When you put these colours together as a swatch, they look dreadful. But the distance apart in this enormous room gives them

their space, and they look wonderful together."

"Coincidentally, the colours blend in with the vegetable dyes in the old Persian rugs on the wooden floor. I'm not usually one for mixing and matching but the furniture and the rugs do look marvellous together."

Ms Waddell chose the old established London firm of Charles Pateman & Co to carry out the re-upholstering. "The company employs traditional methods, such as using horse hair and hand-stitching, and was sympathetic to my ideas," she says.

"Despite the size of the sofas — 7ft long — I wanted to give them an understated, unpretentious look. I didn't want them over-designed with fringing and piping, which would make them stand out like a sore thumb. I

wanted them to appear as an integral part of the room."

"Fifty years of continuous use meant we had to strip the sofas back to the frames and work from there. They were in such a state it was difficult to see their original shape. We had to figure out the line of their serpentine backs and take the original arms to bits. We also decided to use a skirt rather than show the original bun feet, to keep the shape as simple as possible."

"We're thrilled to bits with the sofas," Lady Christie says. "They fit just perfectly and look as if they were made for the room. I've never seen covers so beautifully made."

She says it now seems strange to recall that the Organ Room began life as an Elton fives court attached to the Glyndebourne manor house which John Christie, Lady Christie's father-in-law, inherited at the end of the first world war. In typically flamboyant style, he

bought an organ company in order to have his own organ built in the room he constructed on the site of the fives court in 1920. Concerts were held there for local people until the opera house was built in 1934.

Visitors to Glyndebourne will still use the Organ Room after the new theatre, currently being built, is opened. Designed by Michael Hopkins, this will be finished in time for the 1994 festival.

Few visitors realise that the Organ Room was where the seeds of Glyndebourne's international reputation were sown. It was here that John Christie met Audrey Midway, a soprano singing with the Carl Rosa Company in 1930. "It was love at first sight," Lady Christie says. They married, and it was for Audrey that he built the opera house.

● The Glyndebourne season runs from May 24/July 23 (information on 0273 812321)

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THE unspoiled department of Vienne, centred on the splendid Renaissance town of Poitiers in the Poitou-Charentes region of western France, has so far attracted few British property buyers.

The delightful presbytery pictured below dates from the 17th century and has a large attached barn and stables suitable for conversion. It is in half an acre of vines and fruit trees on the edge of a small hamlet a few miles south of Civray, about four hours' drive from the ferry port of Oustréham (Caen), or 90 minutes from Paris by TGV high-speed train to Poitiers. The price is £43,000 (including agents' fees).

Built in honey-coloured stone, under a shallow pitched roof, the house has been restored in rustic style and retains many original features, including fireplaces and exposed oak beams. It has a farmhouse kitchen, cloakroom with lavatory, shower-room, a huge living-room on the ground floor, three double bedrooms upstairs and access to a large loft for further expansion. The UK agent is Barbers of 427-429 North End Road, SW6 0J7 (071-881 0112).

The surrounding countryside is of gentle hills and wide rivers, with a warm, dry climate, has many medieval towns and villages, lots of pretty châteaux and beautiful Romanesque churches.

The area has several large lakes for windsurfing, sailing and waterskiing, river to fish and underground caves to explore. The Poitou vineyards are nearby and the Atlantic beaches of the Charente-Maritime are a 90-minute drive.

For centuries the stamping ground of the French landed gentry, the Vienne is dotted with small châteaux and

manor houses as well as stone cottages and farmhouses ripe for renovation. £50,000 is the top price and there are plenty for under £15,000.

Rock bottom in the price chart would be a run down village house with two bedrooms, an old-fashioned kitchen and washroom, set in an enclosed courtyard, for about £7,000. Fully restored such a property might fetch £25,000.

Dilapidated farmhouses with oak-beamed ceilings and flagstone floors are thick on the ground and cost from £13,000. Fully renovated, with an acre or two of agricultural land, one would set you back £40,000.

A working farm in the eastern Vienne, with a restored 18th-century maison de maître (nobleman's house) overlooking its own lakes, is for sale at £91,000 through Barbers. The price includes a three-bedroom farmhouse, barn, outbuildings, stables and 22 hectares of meadow and woodlands.

The same agent is asking £300,000 for a turreted 15th-century château in good condition, half an hour's drive south of Poitiers. With eight bedrooms, four reception rooms and original fireplaces, the property is approached by a formal, tree-lined drive and is in 370 acres of ornamental parkland and pastures, with stables and farm buildings.

CHERYL TAYLOR



Rustic: this restored stone presbytery is for sale at £43,000

Ingenuity and flexibility can go a long way to accommodating a disability

Barney Wilson became involved with the Disabled Living Foundation through its founder, Lady Hamilton, who had read about him hauling in a 40lb salmon on the river Tay and decided he must be the sort of enterprising person who would make an ideal trustee. "It's amazing what a fish can do," says Mr Wilson, a former City solicitor.

When he and his wife Jane bought their waterside home in a small market town in Berkshire, its proximity to some decent fishing was as much a consideration as its suitability for his wheelchair.

The Grade II listed house dates from 1805 and is proof that neither a building's character nor its aesthetic appeal need be sacrificed to accommodate a disabled owner. As Mr Wilson says: "You do not necessarily have to go and live in a modern bungalow."

Now vice-chairman of the foundation, which provides information on all aspects of living with disability, Mr Wilson is familiar with the accompanying state-of-the-art gadgetry, some of it designed with extraordinary ingenuity. "Equipment can be extremely effective at replacing the bits of the body that don't work," he says.

Planning is also important. The Wilsons, who still keep a London base in Fulham, spent many weekends camping out in the old servants' quarters of their new home "so that we could see exactly what was wanted. You should not start any sweeping schemes until you get the feel of the place."

"A lot of people who are newly disabled think they must move immediately. But often they do not need to move at all. And it may be better to stay in what you know and make the right adaptations than go to a totally different environment," he says.

The Wilsons' biggest adaptation was installing a lift, choosing a version which combined maximum efficiency with minimum obtrusiveness. Although in effect they lose an upstairs room, it means greater independence than a hoist up the stairs, and when raised leaves the Georgian hall uncluttered.

Mr Wilson, aged 59, contracted polio at 18 months. "So I have never known any different, and that way you don't worry about it so much. Most of the time I hardly think about it. I think the younger you are, particularly if it happens suddenly, the more angry you are likely to be."

"People talk about the challenges of being disabled whereas they really mean the frustrations." For most of his life he managed on crutches. But because of the degenerative nature of the condi-

Breasting the waves



Floating asset: Barney and Jane Wilson and their "dream pool"

tion and the need for a back operation he has more recently been confined to a wheelchair. This has involved both large alterations — such as the stairs and the bathroom, which is extra large with a raised lavatory, a washbasin high enough to get the chair underneath and a special seat in the shower — and minor ones.

Often it is the small things that make the most difference in terms of an easier life: lower light switches and higher wall sockets, for example. "On the Continent light switches are often set low and there is no reason they should not be in this country," Mr Wilson says. "Plugs could be 18in off the ground. But everyone gets used to things being the way they have always been."

The house, in two acres of garden, has the advantage of large rooms (including three bedrooms and a dressing room upstairs, drawing room, morning room and dining room downstairs, plus self-contained staff accommodation at the rear) and wide doorways.

"Obviously not all old houses would be suitable for a disabled person," Mr Wilson says, "but then you can get problems with modern houses, especially the small boxy types. They can be a nightmare."

Outside a converted stable block houses a 32ft by 14ft indoor

Wilson make available to local people who need water physiotherapy, was the realisation of a dream. "It's the best exercise for me and it is what I always wanted," Mr Wilson says.

The pool and the other conversions in the house cost the Wilsons about £100,000 and took nine months to complete. "You have to be vigilant all the time," Mrs Wilson says. "For instance, we originally intended the pool to be 10ft wide, and then when work was well under way we discovered that width would make the surrounding area too narrow for Barney's wheelchair. There was a bit of screaming and yelling at that point, I can tell you."

The Wilsons acknowledge that they are lucky enough to have the know-how and the money to circumvent or minimise many of the problems of disabled living. Even so, Mr Wilson says much can be done on more modest budgets with the right advice, and that government grants and other sources of financial help are available in many circumstances. "The trouble is that people are often unaware of what is available."

Sometimes he has invited people to his home to show what can be done. "We had a father and son here recently. The son had broken his neck in a diving accident 12 years ago. The father told me that they had learnt more in five minutes here than in all the years before," Mr Wilson says.

LIZ GILL



Aladdin's cave: the stock and decorations in Roberts's ironmongers will lure many a bric-a-brac dealer

End of an iron age

The gold prospector, a stooping, bearded man in a floppy-brimmed hat, shuffled conspiratorially out of the gloom of the ironmonger's shop. Not an ordinary Welsh shopper — but then, this is no ordinary ironmonger.

At T.H. Roberts and Son of Dolgellau, Snowdonia, north Wales, where the mountains have yielded gold for royal wedding rings since Victoria and Albert, a 14in diameter prospecting pan costs £10. In "T.H.'s", as the business is known for 100 miles around, they'll tell you the green plastic pans (made in California) are best because the gold dust and the black river sand from which it is washed are more visible.

For 132 years T.H.'s has sold only the best, from Nobel Blasting Gelatine Dynamite and Sheffield-made tools to coffin nails and decorative plates pre-engraved "RIP", but with a place thoughtfully left blank for the name of the deceased.

T.H. Roberts's Parliament House, so named because the three-storey granite building is on the site of Prince Owain Glyndwr's parliament in the early 13th century, is for sale.

Thomas Mason Roberts, the present owner, has retained his grandfather and father's initials of T.H. above the door. He is an elegant, soft-spoken man who served a seven-year apprenticeship in ironmongery. Now 83, he is thinking about retirement. He presides over his "general and furnishing ironmongers" from a

**HOUSE
HUNTER**

**Parliament House
Dolgellau**

ground-floor office that is framed in polished brown mahogany, with glass panels delicately etched with the patterns of wild flowers.

A colossal Victorian fireplace and overmantle mirror is laden with ironmongery reference books from the turn of the century. Below, in the slate-slatted basement, is the powder store, where in the past T.H. kept enough explosive to transport the shop to the top of nearby Cader Idris.

The three specially strengthened floors above contain "the stock". Stock-taking lasts a month, and includes a hand-pumped Daisy Vacuum Cleaner manufactured by Hyram Maxim, who in 1884 invented the first automatic machine gun.

The stock also includes dozens of coloured and clear-glass chimneys for paraffin lamps, enamelled brown kettles, and buckets and churns of all shapes and sizes. In a corner stands one of the first Electrolux refrigerators, which was powered by paraffin oil.

Mr Roberts was born in the gentleman's residence next door to the shop. The dressed stone house is an outstanding example of the "upstairs-downstairs" Victorian tradition.

The hallway, with its Minton-coloured mosaic tiles, leads first into the smoking-room, which like all the other rooms has a high, plaster-moulded ceiling. The decorative cast-iron "oil" fireplace, which could be angled to obtain a good draught, has a solid oak surround and mirrored top. There is, of course, a morning-room, adjoining a scullery and pantry. Below stairs, a massive black iron Eagle range cooker for and heated the rest of the house.

A polished pitch pine staircase leads up to another three floors that house the dining-room, and a sitting-room with a marble fireplace inset with tiles showing scenes from Shakespeare plays. The bathroom's huge cast-iron tub stands on four sculpted claw feet, and the separate WC has a high-level cistern in lead-lined mahogany connected by a polished brass flush pipe to the mahogany-seated throne.

There are five bedrooms, each with either a marble or slate fireplace, and an assortment of servants' rooms. Dismantled and offered piecemeal to an antique shop the contents of Parliament House would be worth a fortune. But there will never, ever, be another T.H. Roberts, guardian of a golden age in hardware.

GARETH PARRY

● Shop and house £185,000 (as a going concern, plus stock at valuation). Warehouse £40,000. Enquiries to Farmers Moss, Llys Meirion, Dolgellau, Gwynedd LL40 1AB (0341 422334).

GIFT!

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£222.500

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QUAY 430.

£79.500

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£148.000

AL'S

LIAN FLAT

51ST MARCH 1992.

At Liberty to do as they please

Collier Campbell designs are back in business next week. Vinny Lee reports

New shop ventures have been scarce during the recession. But next Thursday the influential textile design sisters Susan Collier and Sarah Campbell will open a shop within a shop at Liberty in Regent Street.

They say that during the last two years they have learnt, from painful experience, some valuable retailing lessons. In 1989 the two designers fulfilled an ambition to open their own shop. "It was somewhere we could show all the colourways of our prints, not just the selection picked by other retailers," Ms Collier says. "We also wanted to demonstrate the versatility of the designs in a fashion and furnishing context."

Their shop did not survive, but its short life gave them vital retail knowledge. "Our designs are created by us, really painted by our hands. They combine innovative mixes of colours and subjects that do not comply with anyone else's codes," Ms Collier says. "And because the materials are different, and often in unusual shades, we found that people needed help in putting together a whole look. Supplying the chintz and cotton fabrics alone was not enough. The customer wanted wallpapers and borders, upholstery fabric and plain colours to mix with the designs. They demanded a full service."

The opening of their outlet at Liberty, whose design studios employed the sisters in the early days of their careers 30 years ago and, later, as consultants, shows that they have heeded customers' comments.

Their new cotton chintz print collection, Gypsy Pavilion, is accompanied by a co-ordinating range of three woven patterns suitable for upholstery. Wallpaper, borders and decorative pillows are being prepared for an autumn launch. There are also shower

curtains and towels and new designs in cotton bedlinens, "because people want to carry a colour story through from their bedrooms to their bathrooms", Ms Collier says.

Examples of Collier Campbell prices in cotton bedlinens are double fitted or flat sheet £27.95; standard pillowcase £8.95; Oxford £12.95; double duvet cover £59. For the bathroom a face cloth costs £2.95; a hand towel £9.95; bath towels £14.95 each. Matching rag rugs and traditional-style quilts featuring Collier Campbell prints complete the picture, and if a customer wants to wear co-ordinating nightwear there will be, at Liberty only, silk pyjamas, dressing gowns and cotton kimonos.

To complement sitting, dining and bedroom decor there is stationery, party napkins and paper plates, photo albums and wrapping paper. Polycotton table linen comes with handpainted napkin rings. The sisters have also created capsule collections for the nation's wide groups of John Lewis and the House of Fraser. In addition to the designs they already provide for the John Lewis label, the John Lewis Partnership has ordered a pure cotton range of bedlinens in the new design Gypsy Dance, due out in May. The print features what Ms Collier describes as "a European celebration, based on ceramic bowls of cherries, vases of flowers, themes taken from rugs and carpets and decorative boxes of secrets".

The House of Fraser will be stocking three specially coloured ranges of polycotton bedlinens in the autumn - Tambourine, a large floral print with freethand-drawn stripes on the reverse; Misty Lagoon, a densely patterned abstract; and Frontiers, a darker, more sultry theme.

On sale too will be ready-made curtains and towels to match.



On the move: sister designers Sarah Campbell (left) and Susan Collier learnt from their shop's failure

Wallpaper borders will follow. The upholstery company Outline has taken Collier Campbell woven fabrics for its armchairs and sofas. Matching curtains are in the pipeline.

Ms Collier feels that the recession has had its effect on the colour and content of the Gypsy Pavilion collection. "We thought it was time to be optimistic and joyful as a reaction against the gloom. The Tambourine floral print is in strong pink, yellow, green and gentian blue. This print in particular had a great reception from buyers: they say it makes them feel happy."

The wholesale fashion and fashion accessory side to the sisters' business has been put on hold, although a small range of the popular ties, scarves and umbrellas can be found at Liberty. "We were doing too many different things and we really needed to concentrate our energies in one field, so the Collier Campbell at Home line is our priority," Ms Collier says.

The lessons the sisters learnt by losing their shop have been beneficial. Their business is leaner and meaner in terms of direction and commitment, and has focused on providing a complete range to their home-style customers. In America, where the sisters do not spend much time, their

homeware sales are more than \$30 million, second only in the market to the Ralph Lauren retailing empire.

But Britain is still where their hearts are, and Ms Collier looks back to the day when the doors of their Conduit Street shop closed. "We received a letter from Richard Stow, a friend of my father's, who had liked our shop, how sad he was to see it close and that, in view of our long-standing relationship with his company, if we would like 'lodgings' up the road, he would be pleased to help."

Collier Campbell's shop within a shop, Liberty, Regent Street, London W1 017-734 1234.

Rolled gold out of Havana

Cuban cigars made before Castro came to power are as collectable as vintage claret

Kipling wrote scathingly that a woman was only a woman, but a good cigar was a smoke. He may have been wrong on both counts. Today, a good cigar is not for burning but is a collectable rivaling some of the best of ageing clarets and vintage ports.

If it is a pre-revolutionary Havana, hang on to it, because the United States embargo of 1962 virtually cut off supplies of vintage smokers. Like wine, premium cigars benefit from ageing, hence the demand for pre-1960s examples. Time lessens the harshness of the tobacco, like the mellowing of tannins in a powerful young wine.

The most reliable indicator for collectors of pre-revolutionary cigars are the words "Made in Havana, Cuba" printed on the base of the box, as opposed to "Hecho in Cuba", introduced in the early 1960s. Unopened boxes that have been left to mature are the most sought after. "Aficionados are known to pay way over the odds for top vintage smokes," Simon Chase, of the Havana importers Hunters & Frankau, says.

"Pre-revolution cigars, in particular, have a magical aura in our market, because they are hard to come by. London is the best place to find them, because we lay down cigars. Cigar reserves are passed down through families, but people then forget them, or die, which is an awful headache for companies like Dunhill or Fox's, who can't always trace the beneficiary."

Such cigars, he says, are worth 30-50 per cent more than the

current retail price - or around £8 for a mid-sized corona, compared with £5 - and the value could rise a hundredfold within a few years.

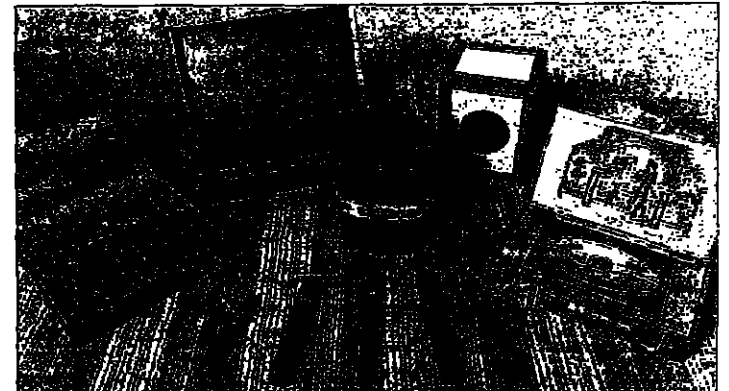
Cuba, Castro's most coveted cigar created for him by Che Guevara, is well worth conserving. Castro regularly sent them to the Prince of Wales, but as a non-smoker he handed them over to Jimmy Savile. They are still hard to find: it took Hunters & Frankau a year to track down 1,000 Cohiba Robustos (around £9 each) for the actor Tom Cruise.

Observation of smoking dos and don'ts is essential. Keeping the label on is no longer the hallmark of a cad - indeed, in this age of label flashing it is perfectly acceptable. And while you drift off in a haze of Havana, consider the culture that has history.

For centuries readers entertained Havana's cigar rollers with passages from literature's greats, hence such brand names as Romeo y Julieta and Monte Cristo. Today, however, the workers prefer to listen to Dame Barbara Cartland. Could this mean cigar buffs will one day "lay down" a full-bodied and flavoursome Love under Fire?

LOUISE RODDON

London retailers: Davidoff, 35 St James's St, London W1 017-0100; Alfred Dunhill, 30 Duke St, W1 017-499 9566; J.J. Fox, 2 Burlington Gardens, W1 017-493 9009; Desmond Sawyer, 106 Mount Street, W1 017-430 3079; Hunters & Frankau, Hurlingham Business Park, Sullivan Rd, SW6 017-736 6533.



Top smokes: pre-1960s cigars range in price from £4 to £12 each

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALAN EXCEL will you marry me? Love from M.L.

INDEPENDENT Women's community centre, 38, St. James's St, London W1 017-0100. Tel: 017-0100.

ST. CLARE'S Homeless Shelter, 11, St. Clare's St, London W1 017-0100. Tel: 017-0100.

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STUDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

LAWYER, M.D. condition, contract, property, etc. Tel: 017-0100.

MUM & DAD, Happy Anniversary, Tel: 017-0100.

OLD Testament, 1992, Dinosaur, Tel: 017-0100.

PAYPHONE, "Red Telephone", Tel: 017-0100.

PODGE, MATTHEW ALEXANDER, Tel: 017-0100.

PRINTING, D.C. 88, WPM, 12000, Tel: 017-0100.

RECORDING, D.C. 88, WPM, 12000, Tel: 017-0100.

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SERVICES

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CHANNEL 4

Verdi from the Garden: Kiri Te Kanawa as Amelia (2.00pm)

- 2.00 **Opera On 4: Simon Bocanegra.** Elijah Moskuschy's new stage production of Verdi's opera with Alexander Archang in the title role and Kim Te Kanawa as Amelia. Recorded at the Royal Opera House. The conductor is Sir Georg Solti. (x1:20764C)
- 4.30 **City News: Fourteen Days Passage (14)** Series based on police officers' diaries. A dead man's body is smuggled into the States. City news to meet and a. (x1:20764C)
- 5.00 **Scandalgeist 4.55 News and weather (8:55-8:59)**
[Scandalgeist] Duncan Campbell investigates a Glasgow scientist who gained publicity and funds after claiming he was on the verge of a breakthrough in AIDS research. (8:58:4)

330 **Star Chamber** (TV) **1995** Patten faces half an hour of computer questions in another live, antislavery to the phone, election campaign. Like Roy Hattersley, and Paddy Ashdown before him, the Conservative party chairman reveals a Patten side not always evident in the political arena. Patten is a man of few words, but his dry wit at the podium is a revelation. Has he really, as he is often accused of confessing? Lee Remick, Popeye, and an Botham image as favourite people, while Patten's ideas of culture are notably out of date and impractical. One reservation about the series is that Patten is too much concerned with the past, and asks the wrong sort of questions of all its victims. Perhaps, in these sensitive times the word is warned about political balance. (5) (S4)

331 **The Press Gang** Award-winning children's drama series about a young boy, Patten, and his friends, using the Junior Gazette in the 1950s. (11) (S4)

332 **The Wonder Years** Comedy drama series about growing up in 1960s America. (8) (7)

333 **Frangible Earth: The End of the Game** Poachers in Kenya have

the black market, possibly exhibit, but in Japan, rights to a meeting to discuss the lifting of the ban on ivory trading. (Telex) (2536)

0.00 Whicker's World – Down Under. The fifth of Alan Whicker's six-part series features migrants who try to keep their Old World way of life and eccentricity (V) (6888)


0.30 Childhood The first of a new seven-part documentary tracing child development from birth to puberty across four continents (V) (7404)

0.30 Burning Books Includes a discussion on the ethics of *True Crime*, a novel based on the trial of American serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer. Plus reviews of *Vox* by Nicholson Baker, *Wild Swans* by Jung Chang and *Maus* by Art Spiegelman (3772)

0.00 Film: Up the Creek (1956, b/w) The Peter Sellers season continues with this minor naval comedy about a fly Irish boss and his manipulation of a bumbling captain (David Tomlinson) Directed by Val Guest (Telex) (271913)

1.35 Film: Welcome to Germany (1959) Tony Curtis stars as an American film director in Germany to make a movie. Anecdotes recalling an incident during the second world war. An in-depth study of guilt and redemption, directed by Thomas Brasch in German with some English subtitles (944511) Ends at 1.30

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[illegible]

09 From the Proms 1991:
Orchestre de Paris under
Semyon Bychkov performs
Beethoven's (Piano Concerto No
5) and Chopin's (Prelude
B-flat), Shostakovich
(Symphony No 10), and 11.40
interval Reading (f)

5.00pm Replay
● CHOICE In this 40-year-old
programme from the BBC sound
archives, the man who
introduced Lawrence to
Arabic, Sir Ronald Stora,
former governor of Jerusalem
and Judea, gleefully adds some
brilliant examples of Arab
music to the multiple portrait others
have painted of the
charismatic leader of the Arab
revolt. In only 11 words, Stora
very succinctly sums up
Lawrence's desert
strategy and dramatic exit in a

Madame Tanyanyakaya in John
Teyssier's 1974 production of
Cherkov's *The Cherry
Orchard*. With Anna Massey
as Anya and Kenneth Haugh
as Lopakhin

9.20 Henze (Nachtschmerz) and
Arioso: Violin Concerto No 1
Heller: Capriccio Imperator: BBC
PO under Marilena Stanzani, and
10.15 Interval Reading (f)

10.55 Thomas Allen, baritone, with
Geoffrey Parsons, piano, sings
Haydn (*She Never Told Her
Love*); The Wanderer: Sator's
Song); Schumann (Widmung;
10.45 Interval Reading (f)
wie eine Bäume, Zwei
venezianische Lieder;
Hochlandern Abschied); Wolf
(Fussreise; Nun ward
Märchen, Auf sein Ende Blick;
Geht der Muschelstern der
Kern von Ewigkeit aus)

9.00 **penicilist Dr Steve Jones (s)**
12.55 Weather
 10.00 **The World This Weekend**
 with Nick Clarke
 10.00 **Open House** Question Time:
 A postbag edition, with Clay
 Jones and experts
 10.00 **Sunday Playhouse** A
 Scourge of Hyacinths. In this
 play by Wole Soyinka, 1966
 winner of the Nobel Prize for
 Literature, the sinister forces
 Against Discipline are active
 somewhere near Lagos.
 Miguel Domingo, who comes
 from an influential family, has
 been lately arrested. Will he
 escape his fate? (r)
 10.00 **The Radio Programme:**
 Laurie Taylor presents a report
 from the United States on the
 search by NASA for radio
 messages from outer space
 10.00 **Save** Jay's host to artists,
 musicians, directors, actors
 and sponsors to debate the
 proposition that: 'Bntan is
 failing to ensure the future of
 the arts' With Brian Redhead
 in the chair
 9.00 **The National History**
Programme (r)
 9.30 **Special Assignment (r)** 9.50
Weather
 10.00 **News**
 10.15 **Exile** A Nation Divided
 In this episode Nickyella tells the story
 of the "subudiso" - a restless
 people, who remain in exile 50
 years after they fled Spain
 during the civil war in the
 1500s (a)
 11.00 **The Committee**, with Patrick
 Beardsley
 11.30 **Seed of Faith: The Celtic**
Way - Poets and Pilgrims. On
 the final leg of his journey, Ian

[illegible]

BBC 1

- 6.35 Open University: Chemistry** - What Makes a Reaction Go? 7.00 *Isomorphism* (788891) 7.25 News and weather (801958)
- 7.30 Crystal Tapes and Allstars** (7) (1379184) 7.35 *Wiz Bang*. Fun and laughter interlude (328271) 7.45 *The Jetsons* (1) (2267146)
- 8.05 Eggs 'n' Baker**. Cheryl Baker goes to Billingsgate fish market and visits an unusual fish and chip shop. Music is provided by Fresh and Tasty For Fours (8) (802071) 8.35 *Thundercats*. Cartoon (7) (883726)
- 9.00 Going Live!** presented by Philip Schofield and Sarah Greene. Taking part in the "Double Dare" are Top of the Pops presenter Mark Franklin and actress Liza Walker from *Teenage Health Freak* (8) (46201765) 12.12 *Weather* (8261233)
- 12.15 Grandstand** introduced by Steve Rider. The line-up is (subject to alteration): 12.20 Football: a review of the FA Cup fifth round replay; 12.35 and 4.00 Athletics: action from the Nairobi cross-country and the European indoor championships in Genoa; 1.00 News; 1.05 Motor Racing: news of the final practice for tomorrow's South African grand prix at the Kyalami circuit; 1.25 Racing from Haydock Park and Newbury; the 1.30, 2.00, 2.30 and 3.00 from Newbury and the 1.45, 2.15 and 2.45 from Newbury; 3.05 Bowls: the pairs final of the Midland Bank world indoor championships from Preston; 3.50 Football half-times; 4.35 Final Score (8877538)
- 5.05 News and weather** (7231287)
- 5.15 Regional News and sport** (8339287)
- 5.20 Story Teller** Tony Robinson with the first of two programmes devoted to Popeye cartoons (287417)
- 5.45 Big Break**. Snooker quiz presented by Jim Davidson. This week the guests are Cliff Thorburn, Warren King and Jimmy White. (Coefax) (8) (470349)
- 6.15 News**. Reusable fun and games hosted by Noel Edmonds. Among the guests is comedian Tom O'Connor (8) (565558)
- 7.05 The Paul Daniels Magic Show**. The guests are Gina Athoff from Germany and Britain's All Bongo. (Coefax) (8) (15634542)
- 7.50 Columbo: Most Dangerous Match**. The shrewd detective investigates the murder of a former world chess champion who died after playing the current number one. Starring Peter Falk and Laurence Harvey (7) (Coefax) (281078)
- 9.00 Moon and Son: Past, Present and Future**. Variable astrological thriller series from *Bergan* creator Robert Benke Stewart starring Millicent Martin and John Michie. This week Gladys and her son Trevor come to the aid of the servants of a stately home who believe their late master's will made provision for them but cannot find the will. (Coefax) (8) (742788)
- 9.55 News** with Martyn Lewis. (Coefax) Sport and weather (235891)
- 10.15 That's Life!** Lighthearted consumer affairs series presented by

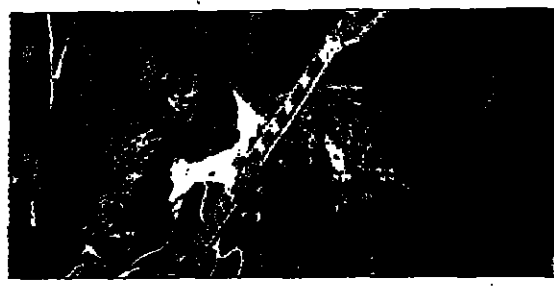


Stars in their eyes: Laurence Harvey and John Michie (9.00pm)

- Ether Rantzen. (Coefax) (8) (296366)
- 10.55 Midnight Caller**. The conclusion of the two-part story begun last week when chat show host Jack Killian (Gary Cole) became caught between rioting convicts and the prison authorities. Now the only hostage, he faces the wrath of a murderer he put behind bars. (Coefax) (8) (814813)
- 11.45 Film: In the Heat of the Night** (1967).
- **CHOICE:** This story of two policemen, black and white, reluctantly joining forces on a homicide in the American deep south has spawned two cinema sequels, as well as a television series, but none has surpassed the original. The whodunit is one of the best of its kind, for it is the racial aspect as boldly as and as penetratingly explored as the film's reputation might suggest. Essentially *In the Heat of the Night* is well-crafted entertainment, sustained by a crisp script (Stirling Silliphant), firm direction (Norman Jewison), lots of small-town atmosphere and two fine performances. Too often in films Sidney Poitier has played the white man's favourite black and Red Steagall has caricatured the Method. Here Poitier effaces his charm and Steagall reins in his mannerisms and neither star has been more effective. (Coefax) (232387) 1.30 *Weather* (783088)

BBC 2

- 6.40 Open University** (88366)
- 3.00 Mahabharat**. Epic Indian drama serial. In Hindi with English subtitles (3185). Wales (to 5.00): Welsh Labour Party Conference
- 3.40 The Sky at Night**. Patrick Moore takes viewers on a guided tour of the night sky through binoculars, including Orion, star clusters and Jupiter (7) (857081)
- 4.00 Regional Westminster Programmes** (639). Northern Ireland: Springfield
- 4.30 Bowls**. The pairs final of the Midland Bank world indoor championships from the Guild Hall, Preston (8) (1271087)
- 6.10 Late Again**. Highlights from the week's arts and media magazine, *The Late Show* (859964)
- 6.55 News** with Chris Lowe. Sport and weather (901271)
- 7.10 Standing Room Only**. In Africa presented by Simon O'Brien and John Fashanu. A one-off documentary from the football fanzine show about soccer in Africa, using the African National Congress as a backdrop. With contributions from Solomon Mwene of the South Africa FA, Abdel Pile, the African Footballer of the Year, Yeo Martial, coach of the new African champions Ivory Coast, and Bobby Charlton (34513)
- 8.10 Fine Cut: Lessons of Darkness**.
- **CHOICE:** Made by the German cinema director Werner Herzog, *Lessons of Darkness* is a documentary about the aftermath of the war in Kuwait which eschews most documentary conventions. Commentary (by Herzog himself) is kept to a minimum. There are no interviews, unless you include the grunts of a worker who lost her speech after watching her home being tortured to death. Music, by Greg Maier, Wagner and others replaces natural sound. Above all the images, brilliantly captured by the British cameraman Paul Barri, are not a formal record but an imaginative impression. Apart from the dazzling yellow of burning oil wells, the colours are mostly grey, brown and black. The film is a masterpiece of understatement only by bomb craters or smashed vehicles, look more like science fiction than real locations. Humans are dwarfed by landscape but this is still an essay on the folly of human destruction (256510)
- 9.00 Film: Wise Guys** (1986) starring Danny DeVito, Joe Piscopo and Harvey Keitel. This first of a season of "mobster" movies is a



Veteran virtuoso of the electric guitar: B.B. King (10.30pm)

- comedy about organised crime in New York with DeVito and Piscopo as two bumbling Laurel and Hardy types trying to milk their sadistic boss of a stash of money in a gambling scheme. Directed by Brian De Palma, it failed to gain a cinema release (Coefax) (2813). Wales: Un Nos Lleid
- 10.30 Guitar Legends: Through the Electric Age**.
- **CHOICE:** A celebration of the electric guitar begins and ends with a nod to Spanish flamenco but this is essentially an American story, with British interludes. Interviewing a dozen key names, from B.B. King to Robert Cray and the 76-year-old Les Paul, and working in the contributions of blues, soul, jazz and folk, Peter Lydon's documentary comes close to being a potted history of popular music over the past 40 years. Lydon gives special emphasis to the 1940s-1950s contributions of Charlie Christian from the Benny Goodman band and Jimmy Hendrix, while crossing the Atlantic to take in the Beatles, Led Zeppelin and Eric Clapton. But the film is more than a list of names and it forms an ideal trailer to the series of guitar concerts which begins at 11.30 (8) (38638)
- 11.30 Blues and Soul Night**. The first of five concerts from the Seville '92. Includes performances by Albert Collins, Robert Cray, B.B. King, Dr. John, Steve Cropper, George Thorogood and Dave Edmunds playing "Sabbath Deep". Ends at 1.05am

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ITV

- 6.00 TV-am** (9947881)
- 8.25 Motormouth**. Young people's entertainment presented by Neil Buchanan, Andy Crane, Steve Johnson and Gaby Roslin. Includes the results of the Lloyds Bank Fashion Challenge, a look at hearing dogs for the deaf, stunt cycling and music from Airhead (77483078)
- 11.30 Zorro**. The first of a new series of swashbuckling adventures set in Spanish-owned California in the 1820s. Starring Duncan Regehr and Ehem Zimbalist Jr. (8875)
- 12.00 The ITV Chart Show**. The Video Vault features Luther Vandross with "Give Me the Reason" (51810)
- 1.00 News** with Sue Carpenter. Weather (53111146) 1.05 LWT News and weather (53110417)
- 1.10 Saint & Gravelle**. Ian and Jimmy preview the Rumblecup Cup semi-final scores, logs and review highlights of the week's Barclays league action (3744538)
- 1.55 Snooker**. The opening session of the best-of-19 frames final of the Pearl Assurance British open, introduced by Nick Owen from the Assembly Rooms, Derby (5500078)
- 4.45 Results Service** presented by Eton Welsby (4812184)
- 5.00 News** with Sue Carpenter. Weather (3235504) 5.05 LWT News and weather (7153465)
- 5.15 10 Street** Pat Sharp is joined by singers Zoe and Rozalla and musician Dave Williamson (7158533)
- 6.25 Baywatch**. The bronze Los Angeles County lifeguards kick sand in the face of another villain and rescue the mandatory bikini-clad beauty. Starring David Hasselhoff. (Coefax) (8) (7250271)
- 6.30 Family Fortunes**. The first of a new series of the game show hosted by Les Dennis (8) (104146)
- 6.50 Stars in Their Eyes**. Another five pop fans try to emulate their favourite stars. Presented by Leslie Crowther. (Coefax) (725504)
- 7.20 The Brian Conley Show**. The comedian is joined by Linda Lusardi who tries to make the host into a catwalk star (8) (48504)
- 7.50 Murder 'She Wrote**. If the Shoe Fits. Crime writer Jessica Fletcher does some sleuthing when a poorly paid factory worker, struggling to bring up her son, becomes the prime suspect when her obnoxious landlord is murdered. Starring Angela Lansbury and, in this episode, Lorna Latt, daughter of Judy Garland. (Coefax) (8) (51222)
- 8.45 News** with Sue Carpenter. Weather (883642) 9.00 LWT Weather (883642)
- 9.05 The Other Side of Paradise**. Episode two of the four-part romantic series, based on the novel by Noel Streatfeild, starring Jason Connery as an English doctor on a South Sea island during the second world war. With Richard Wilson and Hywel Bennett.



A lesson in catwalk modelling: comedian Brian Conley (7.20pm)

- (Coefax) (8) (740320)
- 10.05 Aspel & Company**. Michael Aspel is joined by song and dance man Tommy Steele, actress Shirley Anne Field and comedian Paul Merton (185417)
- 10.50 Snooker**. The closing session of the best-of-19 frames final of the Pearl Assurance British open, introduced by Nick Owen (22550417)
- 12.35 Sea of Duty**. American drama series about a group of navy recruits on active service during the Vietnam war (7450082)
- 1.40 Passengers**. A celebrity tour of the lights of Rome (7184739)
- 2.10 WWC Pro Wrestling**. More grunt, grapple and groan from the United States (4542555)
- 3.10 Bhanga Beas**. Asian music and dance series (3796324)
- 3.40 American College Football**. Texas A & M (4031352)
- 4.40 The Hit Man**. Her. Disco sounds, news and fashions. With Pete Waterman and Michaela Strachan (4855913)
- 5.30 ITN Morning News** with Tim Nelson (88246). Ends at 6.00

CHANNEL 4

- 6.00 Polo Position**. Animation (8094875) 6.25 Dr Snuggles. Cart adventures of an eccentric inventor (522833) 6.55 *Once Upon a Time ... Space* (873504) 7.25 *The Complete Spider*. Advice sheets of all abilities (755876) 7.55 *Trans World Sport*. International sporting news (1885097)
- 9.00 News** summary (8230097) 9.15 *Racing: The Morning Li* (103823) 9.30 *Listening Eye*. Magazine series for the hearing impaired (7) (48232)
- 10.00 The Big 8**. More from the wheelchair basketball tournament Sheffield (7). (Teletext) (8) (94930)
- 10.30 Film: Berlin Correspondent** (1942, b/w) starring Dana Andrews. Enjoyably dull second world war melodrama about an American radio journalist in Berlin who becomes involved in the girlfriend of Gestapo officer. Directed by Eugene Forde (8852417)
- 11.45 Rickshaw Man**. A Belgian short about a young man who raises money by offering a rickshaw taxi service (7) (4614894)
- 12.00 Get Smart**. Spoof secret service series (23894)
- 12.30 The Beverly Hills Cop**. Comedy about an oil rich mountain far who moves to Hollywood Beverly Hills (74717)
- 1.00 Film: Manhattan Melodrama** (1934, b/w) starring Clark Gable, William Powell, Leo Carrillo and Myrna Loy. Solid drama on the woe theme of childhood friends who go their separate ways when they grow up, in this case becoming gangster, lawyer and priest. Directed by W.S. Van Dyke (7247838)
- 2.40 Film: Mogambo** (1953) starring Clark Gable, Ava Gardner, Grace Kelly. Easy-going romantic triangle drama set in East Africa and involving a stranded showgirl, her hunter boyfriend and married American woman. Directed by John Ford (4723362)
- 4.40 Joe McDoakes in So You Want to Be a Salesman** (b/w) (28032) 5.05 *Brookside Omnibus* (7). (Teletext) (8) (4455542)
- 5.30 Right to Reply**. Are presenters overpaid and underworked? (Teletext) (8) (436)
- 7.00 A Week in Politics** with Vincent Hanna and Julia Langford. Includes an interview with Paddy Ashdown (3271)
- 8.00 11.45 TV Heaven**. Frank Muir introduces another evening of vintage entertainment, the week from the year 1955 (522368)
- 8.05 The Saint** (b/w) starring Roger Moore as Simon Templar, a character created by Leslie Charteris in 1928. He is joined in this episode by Nyree Dawn Porter as she investigates a case blackmail (482810)
- 8.30 The Woody Allen Show** (b/w). Before he began his career in film



African romance: Ava Gardner and Clark Gable (2.40p). Woody Allen was a stand-up comedian with a rambling style. T. Granada programme shows him performing classics from his act (Teletext) (8) (2233)

- 10.10 The Human Jungle** (b/w).
- **CHOICE:** Now here is an attention grabber. A young woman seen descending an escalator in the London Tube. She comes to a stop, looks back over her shoulder, and then she turns around, revealing her naked body under a train. And all before the open title. Of further interest from a post-Dynasty perspective is that a compulsive stripper is played by Joan Collins, recognisable from her voice that her short, straight hair and prominent nose. The Human Jungle was a 1983s TV drama featuring Herbert Lu as a psychiatrist who inevitably solved the trickiest cases. T. curious thing about tonight's story, unravelling the social shame a respectable lower middle class family, is that it should have been made in the middle of the swinging Sixties. In an age of permissive society, Victorian morality still had its hold (47981)
- 11.10 Temper: A Tale of the Two Cities** (b/w). An edition of the arts and letters magazine featuring Lynn Seymour and the young p singer Tom Jones (84707)
- 11.45 Court TV: America on Trial**. A single mother living on the dole accused of causing the death of her young son by giving him alcohol at a party (8) (525523)
- 12.45 Film: Death on the Nile** (1940, b/w) starring John Gielgud and Ann Sheridan. Standard murder mystery about a gang who takes the blame when their girlfriend kills a crooked lawyer. Directed by Anatole Litvak (378933)
- 2.10 The Word** (7) (8) (4540197). Ends at 3.05

- SKY ONE**
- **Via the Astra and Mariposa satellites.** 6.00pm *Danger Bay* (24728) 6.30 *Elphinstone* (34542) 7.00 *Fun Factory* (4819810) 11.00 *Transformers* (51982) 11.30 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 12.00 *Beyond* (51982) 12.30 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 1.00 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 1.30 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 2.00 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 2.30 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 3.00 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 3.30 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 4.00 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 4.30 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 5.00 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 5.30 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 6.00 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 6.30 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 7.00 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 7.30 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 8.00 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (51982) 8.30 *Star Trek: The Next 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